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OF THE

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Cover Illustration, COMMON or AMERICAN EIDER, Emily Goode

The President's Page



Since this is written at the time of year when all should observe that "It is more blessed to give than to receive," I wish to report to those who presumably attended, or at least meant to attend, the funeral of our long-time Chairman of the Board of Directors, Francis H. Allen, and who noted in the printed notice of this funeral that "Those intending to send flowers may instead send a contribution to the Massachusetts Audubon Society," that there were a dozen contributors (only five of whom were Directors), and the total received was \$143.

It would seem a pity not to build this fund up to the amount of the James Kelsey Whittemore Fund, "interest from which will provide copies of Roger Tory Peterson's *Field Guide to the Birds* as awards for excellent work in the Audubon school and camp educational program" (reported in our *Bulletin*, November, 1948), the principal being \$400, which is on deposit in a savings bank.

I am hoping greatly that those who had learned to appreciate the exceptional qualities of heart and head possessed by Francis H. Allen, Esq. will be willing and able to duplicate the present amount.

Robert Walcott

Birds of the Prairies and the Black Hills

By R. DUDLEY ROSS



EDWARD M. BRIGHAM, JR.

A Male Kirtland's Warbler Feeding Its Young

Once more "the Trio," consisting of my wife Vivian, Mrs. Ruth Emery, and I, was on the way. For some time we had been planning and looking forward to what we called "our prairie trip," and as we planned the plot thickened and we decided we couldn't pass up the Black Hills of South Dakota when we would be so near them. Then we decided that on our way west we should stop off in Michigan and try to see the Kirtland's Warbler. So our itinerary changed often, in anticipation.

It was a wonderful trip! Among other especially "birdy" spots we visited seven Federal wildlife refuges, Wind Cave National Park, two national monuments, and the Black Hills National Forest. We drove a total of about 5700 miles and logged 251 species of birds, plus 33 more subspecies, for a grand total of 284 forms; in addition we observed 22 species of mammals. It was a wonderful trip!!!

We left my home at Wilbraham, Massachusetts, at noon on May 15, 1953. Our plan was to drive rather rapidly at first so as to have more time at strategic spots for birding; we kept on to Niagara Falls that first day.

May 16. We viewed the Falls first thing and on the Niagara River had our first birding. There were Common Loons, Red-breasted Mergansers, Ring-necked Ducks, an Old-squaw, a Canvas-back, an American Golden-eye, and, to our astonishment, six Barrow's Golden-eyes. An auspicious start!

Crossing into Canada, we drove through many peach and apple orchards and in a very short time reached Michigan and were back in the United States. Heading northwest, we saw two Purple Martins at Sterling, a Tufted Titmouse

at Rose City, and we reached the little town of Mio for the night. It was near here that we hoped to meet Michigan's celebrated warbler.

May 17. Starting out at 6 A.M., we went south from Mio, as directed, and turned into what we thought was the correct road. After searching fruitlessly, we decided we were not at the right place, as we knew the Kirtland's Warbler had a loud, ringing song, audible for a considerable distance. Leaving Vivian and Ruth, I went back to Mio and was fortunate in locating State Conservation Officer Verne Dockham, who has studied the warbler for a good many years. Mr. Dockham, in less time than it takes to tell it, took us to the right road. No sooner had we arrived than we heard the bird we were looking for. A few moments' search produced the first bird, and it was thrilling to watch it and to hear it sing, realizing, as we did, that it does not breed anywhere else in the world except in that very limited area. Mr. Dockham estimates that there are only 700 to 800 Kirtland's Warblers in their entire breeding range in north central Michigan.

This warbler is a large bird of striking pattern, and its loud staccato song reminds one of the Northern Water-Thrush. It is an excellent example of specialization, for it is very exacting in its habitat requirements. It nests on the ground in groves of small trees among which the dominant tree is the jack-pine. These small jack-pines appear after forest fires. There must be a fairly heavy ground cover, usually bearberry, blueberry, and sweetfern. It is fascinating to read the following by Dr. Josselyn Van Tyne in Bent's *Life Histories of North American-Wood Warblers*: "The warblers first appear in this cover 9 to 13 years after a fire, when the new pines may be barely 5 feet high. The nesting warblers usually occur in very loose colonies varying from a few pairs to hundreds, but isolated pairs have sometimes been found. As the pines grow, they increasingly shade out the ground cover; after 6 to 12 (rarely 15) years, when the pines have become 12 to 18 feet high, the habitat is no longer used by the warblers. A thick, even stand of pines becomes unattractive to Kirtland's sooner than a thin or uneven stand." However, Mr. Dockham informed us that he had recently found the birds nesting in stands of red pine. This apparently augurs well for this rather rare warbler's future.

Just across the road from the Kirtland's Warblers, we could hear the lazy song of the Clay-colored Sparrow. In fact, while I was finding Mr. Dockham, Ruth and Vivian located three of these birds and were greatly amused by its slow Bzzz Bzzz Bzzz. We were to have it with us almost constantly for the next ten days in the Dakotas, Montana, and Wyoming.

Later, we took the ferry across the Straits of Mackinac (connecting Lakes Huron and Michigan) to St. Ignace, in what is called the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Just after leaving St. Ignace we found six Caspian Terns on the lake shore, and shortly afterwards, while we enjoyed a picnic lunch, we were serenaded by a Winter Wren.

We arrived at our next stop, the Seney National Wildlife Refuge, in mid-afternoon, and found the refuge manager, C. J. Henry, awaiting us. It was unfortunate that we did not have more time at our disposal here, as the refuge has an area of 96,000 acres. Mr. Henry showed us around for the rest of the afternoon, and we commenced to have a good deal of respect for the Federal Refuge program. We did not see any of the Sandhill Cranes which breed at Seney. An early morning visit would have been much better for this, but our trip was barely under way and we had other objectives to achieve. While at Seney we did hear the "song" of the Leconte's Sparrow, but, although Mr.

Henry and I waded about, we did not succeed in getting a satisfactory glimpse of even a single bird. Mr. Henry called our attention to the song, so that we would know it when we should hear it later in North Dakota; it consists of a thin, high-pitched buzz or hiss, so insectlike that it could easily be overlooked.

May 18. We heard two Screech Owls calling at Michigamme, and a little further on we saw five Ravens. We entered Wisconsin about noon and at Superior saw seven Redheads on Lake Superior, with a few Blue-winged Teal, Baldpates, and Lesser Scaups. We were keeping a sharp lookout for Brewer's Blackbirds, Western Meadowlarks, and Yellow-headed Blackbirds. Finally, in Minnesota, we saw our first flock of Brewer's in a ploughed field beside the road. They looked like Rusty Blackbirds, except that the males showed a bluish-purple iridescence about the head and the females had dark eyes instead of the pale yellow eyes of the female Rusty. From then on we saw a great many of these birds. As we drove on, a Pileated Woodpecker flew in front of us and obligingly perched on a dead stump, where we watched it at leisure. Continuing across northern Minnesota, we saw Blue-winged Teal on several ponds and, on Cass Lake, two Holboell's Grebes in their showy breeding plumage, together with a number of Ring-necked Ducks. We spent the night at Bemidji, the home of the mythical Paul Bunyan.

May 19. Shortly after leaving Bemidji we came across a few warblers, while a Red-tailed Hawk soared lazily overhead. Near McLeod we saw a small pond where there was a fine gathering of Black Terns and Franklin's Gulls, also Wilson's Phalaropes, Ring-necked Ducks, and a lone Canvas-back. We estimated that there were about 450 Black Terns and 250 Franklin's Gulls.

We had been eagerly looking for our first Western Meadowlark. Every time we saw a bird in a field or on a fence post or wire we slowed down or stopped until we heard it sing, but it was always the familiar song of our eastern bird. Finally, after stopping for what seemed the thousandth time, the bird we were looking at sang, and its song was longer and much more impressive than the sad, simple melody of the Eastern Meadowlark. It is, as described by Roger Peterson in his *Field Guides*, double-noted and flutelike.

In a marsh near Erskine, Minnesota, we finally caught up with the Yellow-headed Blackbird, by all odds the best-looking of the blackbirds but with a hoarse raucous song. As we entered the plains, which have their eastern edge in the western part of Minnesota, we commenced to see the tumbleweed, famed in song and story, as it "tumbled along in the breeze" and piled up against the fences or in the ditches. We also had our first look at the interesting Thirteen-lined Ground Squirrel, and this was followed in quick succession by a Red Fox and a Migrant Shrike. Just before passing from Minnesota to North Dakota, we had a flock of Golden Plover in summer plumage.

We were now getting into real prairie country in North Dakota. The plains, or prairies, are absolutely flat, there are few towns, hardly any trees, and one can see for miles in every direction. They are very different from anything in our part of the country and give one a wonderful feeling of spaciousness. To a birder, they are marvelous. The abundance of bird life in general is almost beyond belief, and the roadside birding is indescribable. None of us had ever seen anything like it. It is a lazy birder's paradise, for one may see a remarkable variety and number of birds without getting out of one's car. Here you have innumerable roadside sloughs — what we would call a pond or a puddle, depending upon the size. There are many of these sloughs on the plains, although the smaller ones dry up during the hot summer months.



HUGO H. SCHRODER

A Pair of American Avocets

Now we really began our prairie birding. It was an exciting afternoon. First, as we stopped for lunch, a thicket yielded ten species of warblers. Then we saw Shovellers by the roadside and, near the town of Langdon, 150 (that's correct!) Stilt Sandpipers, with a fine variety of ducks and other shore birds. This was soon followed by 13 Hudsonian Godwits. It was hard to believe we were inland, on the prairies; it seemed as though we should have been at Newburyport or on Monomoy Island.

Arriving at Devil's Lake in the late afternoon, we had a wonderful ornithological bill of fare spread before us: Hudsonian Godwits; phalaropes, about evenly divided between Northern and Wilson's; Avocets; Shovellers; Ruddy Ducks; Gadwalls; and Eared Grebes. As if this were not enough, an adult Harris's Sparrow appeared on a near-by fence! There was such a wealth of bird life that it was difficult to absorb it all. The Godwits were handsome in their breeding plumage, as were the Ruddies. Gadwalls are always interesting to us Easterners, and what wouldn't most of us give to see 30 Shovellers at one time! The phalaropes were near at hand and were untroubled by our presence. The somewhat larger Wilson's Phalaropes were even more showy than the Northern ones. The Eared Grebes were gorgeous and looked very distinguished with their pale ear-tufts, which Ruth said looked like a Spanish comb. The lovely Harris's Sparrow was an unexpected dividend for the day. THE bird for all of us, however, was the Avocet, the aristocrat of all shore birds. The contrasting black and white pattern, with the delicate coloring of the head and neck, was a sight to see, while the bird's spindly legs and long recurved bill added a touch of the unusual.

Not long after leaving Devil's Lake we saw our first Swainson's Hawk sitting on a telephone pole, and not much later we had our first Ferruginous Rough-leg. We reached Lower Souris National Wildlife Refuge a little after ten o'clock that evening.

This refuge has an area of 58,650 acres or nearly 100 square miles. It is a long narrow tract extending north to the boundary of Manitoba. It is one of our so-called "duck factories" and is one of the most important of the prairie refuges. Not only does it provide suitable breeding grounds for fifteen

species of ducks and many species of land birds (we saw 114 species of birds here in a day and a half), but it offers feeding and resting quarters for the migratory hordes which pass through the plains in spring and fall. Donald Gray, Refuge Manager, told us that the commonest breeding duck was the Blue-winged Teal, with the Gadwall next. We found both species on nearly every pond we came across.

May 20. Before leaving the refuge headquarters we saw a Willow Thrush, which is merely a Veery slightly disguised. We also saw another Harris's Sparrow and two Lincoln's Sparrows feeding on grain set out for them, and an Orange-crowned Warbler in the near-by underbrush.

Mr. Gray, accompanied by Dr. R. W. Storer, Editor of *The Auk*, took us to the favorite haunts of the elusive and little-known Leconte's Sparrow. We tramped back and forth across the fields, but as it was cold and windy we succeeded in flushing very few birds of any kind. We did, however, have several good looks at the very buffy Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow. Eventually we heard the Leconte's song and managed to flush what we were sure was the bird. A little later we located a bird on the ground, surrounded it, and in this manner got a wonderful close-up view of this handsome sparrow. It is a very secretive bird and difficult to flush.

Back at headquarters we had a picnic lunch and then, after receiving detailed directions from Mr. Gray, went out with the Burrowing Owl first on our list. After a run of little more than five miles we came to a large farmhouse and, sure enough, a careful search of a near-by field revealed two of the odd little ground-dwelling owls. Eight more miles via a dirt road brought us to some open fields, where we hoped to see Chestnut-collared Longspurs, Baird's Sparrows, and possibly Sprague's Pipits. The first-named we found to be abundant, and, in fact, it turned out to be one of the commonest roadside birds wherever we went in North Dakota. We thought its unusual coloring much more attractive than is shown in some of the colored plates, and it has a pleasing song which reminded us of the Western Meadowlark.

Soon we heard a song which we knew must be the Baird's Sparrow. As it was frequently repeated, we did not have much difficulty tracking down the singer, which proved to be the hoped-for bird. We had excellent looks at three of them, but nowhere did we find Sprague's Pipit. We next came to a bridge over the Souris River where State Highway 5 crosses the refuge. Here we found Western Grebes, several Redheads, and some Marbled Godwits. The large grebes, with their sharp black-and-white pattern and sinuous, swanlike necks, seemed very majestic as they swam slowly about.

Turning west on Highway 5, we had half a dozen Western Kingbirds and a Ferruginous Rough-leg within ten minutes. Suddenly we realized that a ploughed field we were passing had a considerable number of small birds in it. We got out to investigate and there, to our astonishment, was a flock of Lapland Longspurs. The field was full of them; wherever we looked there were dozens of them in view, and a careful check showed there were over a thousand birds present.

Mr. Gray had seen a flock of "fancy" geese the day before on a pothole, which is a small pond. Upon locating it, we found the greatest assortment of geese any of us had ever seen: 5 White-fronted, 4 Lesser Snow, 3 Blue, and 70 Lesser Canada Geese, these last-named no larger than the Blue and the White-fronted Geese. On the way to Bottineau for dinner, we saw a Belted Piping Plover beside the road, our last bird for the day.

Back at refuge headquarters, we were met by Mr. Gray and his assistant, Leo Kirsch, and we arranged to start out early next morning to look for Prairie Chickens and to see the Sharp-tailed Grouse perform on their dancing grounds.

May 21. At four o'clock in the morning we were on our way to the dancing grounds. En route we had the great good luck to see three Prairie Chickens and six Sharp-tailed Grouse. The former are becoming decidedly local, and it is no longer possible to be certain of seeing the species. At the dancing grounds, 31 of the Sharp-tailed Grouse were stamping about with their heads lowered and their tails pointed skyward. It was easy to believe that the birds' remarkable performance gave origin to some of the dances of the American Indians.

The marshes along the Souris River were beautiful at sunrise, with Willets and Marbled Godwits calling vociferously. One of the latter, disturbed by our presence, flew low overhead, whistling defiance. As we went on, we saw two more Ferruginous Rough-legs, and later Mr. Gray showed us a tree which held the nest of one of these big birds. The female was on the nest and, as we lingered in the vicinity, the male circled anxiously overhead.

After breakfast, we drove north into Canada, seeing en route Migrant Shrikes, several Western Kingbirds, another Ferruginous, a Tennessee Warbler, many more Chestnut-collared Longspurs, two Swainson's Hawks, and a flock of seven Buff-breasted Sandpipers. We crossed into Manitoba and soon turned in a westerly direction. Horned Larks, Western Meadowlarks, and Clay-colored Sparrows were all about us. Swainson's Hawks appeared for our benefit once again, then another Western Kingbird, and suddenly Vivian, in great excitement, called, "There goes a hawk with a long tail, or maybe it's a Magpie!" We scrambled out of the car in time to see the bird veer across the road, flying very low, our first Magpie. This long-tailed crow is not much-loved in the farming country, as it is a great eater of grain, but it is a fine-looking bird nevertheless. In a few minutes we were in the Province of Saskatchewan, and, in quick succession, we saw another Magpie, Hungarian Partridges, and a Hudsonian Godwit.

Turning south again, we headed straight for Kenmare, North Dakota, and arrived in time for dinner. We telephoned Dr. and Mrs. R. T. Gammell, local bird people who compile the season's reports from the northern prairie region for the National Audubon Society.

May 22. Off to Des Lacs National Wildlife Refuge, only a mile from Kenmare. Our first sight, as we neared the refuge, was a flock of White Pelicans lazily circling against a bright blue sky filled with fluffy white clouds. The country here was more rolling, not absolutely flat as it had been further to the east. Here and there the low rolling hills were broken by wooded ravines, or coulees. Howard S. Hueneke, Refuge Manager, was awaiting us and we set forth without delay, hoping to see Sprague's Pipits, our only "miss" at Lower Souris. We heard the birds singing three miles away as soon as we arrived. Mrs. Gammell had told us the song sounded like someone whirling a bunch of wires, and this was a very good description. The birds were singing on the wing as they circled round and round, going ever higher. As they wheeled, the sun would literally shine through their outstretched wings, accentuating their buffiness. It was a wonderful sight! The song is a descending spiral and is rapidly repeated time and again as the birds fly about in sheer ecstasy. We saw but one bird on the ground but could see its straw-colored

legs and streaked back, two ways in which it differs markedly from the American Pipit which we see in the East. There were many Baird's Sparrows in the same field with the Pipits.

We then saw a few Willets and about 80 White Pelicans on the water. Here the Mallard is the commonest nesting duck, followed by the Green-winged Teal and the Pintail. On one of the lakes we had the thrill of seeing the Western Grebes walking, or running, on the water, just as in Disney's "Water Birds" film. Altogether we saw 31 of these graceful birds, and once, as we watched, four Grebes rose up abreast of one another, ran madly across the surface, and then, as if at a given signal, plunged beneath the water. Finally, we saw our first Spotted Towhee, virtually the same as our own Red-eyed Towhee except for the white spots on back and wings. Its song is different, however, consisting of three or four hurried introductory notes followed by *zshreee*.

May 23. We spent the morning at the refuge and again saw the Western Grebes walking on the water. Then came a procession of Upland Plovers, Marbled Godwits, Baird's Sparrows, Avocets, Forster's Terns, Horned Grebes, Swainson's Hawks, Black Terns, Eared Grebes, Gadwalls, Shovellers, Canvasbacks, Stilt Sandpipers, Western Kingbirds, Migrant Shrikes, Brewer's Blackbirds, Hungarian Partridges, Clay-colored Sparrows, and Chestnut-collared Longspurs.

May 24. We awakened to find the previous night's heavy rain still in progress. Heading westward once again, our first scheduled stop was to be at Medicine Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Montana, where we hoped to see the California Gull. In spite of the rain, we found the birding most exciting. Shortly after entering Montana a bird flew up from the roadside and Ruth called, "Lark Bunting!" — the first of the trip. From then on it was one of the commonest birds. We saw them everywhere in groups of two or three and in flocks up to 20 or 30 at a time. The coal-black males, with their flashing white wing-patches, were a pretty sight. Although we saw many hundreds during the next few days, we never failed to appreciate their twinkling flight.

We arrived at the Medicine Lake Refuge in torrents of rain driven almost horizontally by a gale. Stopping on the causeway crossing the lake, we had lunch in the car. By keeping our windshield wiper going, we were able to watch 16 Western Grebes, some of them at very close range. We had rather unsatisfactory views of several California Gulls and then, luncheon over, headed for the refuge headquarters. Entering the gates, we found ourselves on a dirt road which was constructed like a dike across the fields. It was raised five or six feet above the rest of the ground so that it would be passable when the water was high in the spring. We later learned it had been built only last spring and that the soil for it had been dredged up from the bottom of the near-by marshes. The rain added the finishing touch, so that the slimy earth was more slippery than ice. Our wheels spun and it was only with the greatest difficulty that we achieved a forward speed of five or six miles an hour. To cap the climax, the wind was striking us broadside and kept pushing us sideways toward the edge of the road. Several times we were convinced we could not reach the headquarters, but we did, although it took us over fifteen minutes to travel a distance of less than a mile. Mr. Adams, Refuge Manager, was awaiting us. He had planned to take us by boat on a tour of the refuge, but the weather made this out of the question.

After a pleasant chat with Mr. and Mrs. Adams, Mr. Adams put on his raincoat and showed us an easier way out. He pointed out some of the many bird islands on the way, where we saw about 300 California Gulls, about 200 Ring-billed Gulls, many Double-crested Cormorants, more White Pelicans, Marbled Godwits, Cliff Swallows, Black Terns, and Chestnut-collared Longspurs.

Turning southward in Montana for dinner at Glendive, Lark Buntings were in evidence wherever we went. Then we saw and heard our first Lazuli Buntings, three males and one female. Then more Magpies and Hungarian Partridges, both Eastern and Western Kingbirds, and a dozen Lark Sparrows.

A few miles from Glendive we were held up for twenty minutes by a flash flood. Water was pouring across the road from a swollen stream which not long before had been but a trickle. The road was completely under water for several hundred feet, and the many cars lined up on both sides of the flooded area could only wait. After the water had somewhat subsided, a State highway truck cautiously drove through, and a moment later we gingerly followed. The car behind us became stalled in the middle of the water and was still there when we drove off. This was a rather exciting and completely unexpected adventure.

After dinner we pushed on to Medora, North Dakota, for the night.

(To be continued.)



WHERE WE WENT

1. Seney National Wildlife Refuge.
2. Lower Souris National Wildlife Refuge.
3. Des Lacs National Wildlife Refuge.
4. Medicine Lake National Wildlife Refuge.
5. Theodore Roosevelt National Memorial Park.
6. Devil's Tower National Monument.
7. Wind Cave National Park.
8. Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge.
9. Fort Niobrara National Wildlife Refuge.

Nesting Evening Grosbeaks in Vermont

BY ELIZABETH HOLT DOWNS



It was on May 5, 1953 that we received the first hint that at least one pair of Evening Grosbeaks was considering Glebe Mountain near South Londonderry in southern Vermont as a possible summer residence. On that day we watched a male spread his wings and do a little dance in front of a female. Nine days later we witnessed the mating of a pair — presumably the same pair. By the end of May at least five pairs of Evening Grosbeaks had decided to spend the summer with us. Two of

the females were banded (one with a yellow band on her left leg and an aluminum band on her right, the other with just an aluminum band on her right leg) but the other three were not. Slight differences in plumage enabled us to distinguish three of the males. Accordingly we called these, Spots, Mangy, and Black Spots.

Our observations were, of course, limited to the behavior of the grosbeaks while in our presence. However, they visited us daily (with a very few individual exceptions) and frequently remained for an hour or more at a time. More often than not, our grosbeak day began before six in the morning and did not end until six, seven, and sometimes eight o'clock in the evening. From early May we kept a detailed daily record of their activities.

Courtship, as observed by us, varied in length of time and in ardor. The first courting pair seemed very devoted. They were always together. We saw the male dance several times for his mate — sometimes in the feeder and sometimes on the stones beneath. With his tail pointed almost directly upward and with his head up as he gazed at his mate, his body appeared U-shaped. And, with wings spread, he pivoted slowly and with dignity but with a great deal of ardor. He always fed his mate — sometimes so frequently that she had difficulty taking the food because her mouth was so full. She was most responsive, always accepting his attentions with enthusiasm — swinging her body from side to side, her crest raised, and fluttering her wings excitedly while she was being fed.

While this pair was courting, the other Evening Grosbeaks came to the feeders singly, except occasionally when two males appeared together. Not until May 27 did they give any indication of pairing. On that day the aluminum-banded female was seen with a male in late afternoon. On the next day the yellow-banded female was observed with Spots. Both females were fed by their mates, but the feeding was offered and accepted in perfunctory fashion. The females received these attentions with a minimum fluttering of their wings and no swinging of their bodies. We never saw their mates dance for them during this period. We witnessed no courting activities of the other two pairs of grosbeaks at this time. Indeed, not until a few days later were we certain that they had paired.

On May 30 the female of the first pair "cried" all the time she was being fed or feeding herself. She did this for three days, but on the third day her mate, apparently weary of her crying, ignored her and finally left her for another feeder, whereupon she stopped fluttering her wings but continued to cry. She was the only female that we heard cry at any time. On the first day of her crying an interesting thing occurred. A male, eating in another feeder, cocked his head as if listening and then flew to a third feeder and began to feed the unbanded female that had been eating there by herself.

Since the pairs of Evening Grosbeaks invariably came from and flew toward the southern end of Glebe Mountain, it seems reasonable to assume that it is there that they built their nests. From our house to that end of Glebe Mountain there is nothing but woodland. We do not know when nesting began, but by the second day of June the grosbeaks began to come and go silently, and usually as individuals. Their eating habits changed, too. Whereas previously they had eaten briefly and often, they now ate steadily for much longer periods of time. This was particularly true of the females. They also seemed nervous and apprehensive. Their diet, however, remained the same. While here they ate quantities of sunflower seeds and some salt-impregnated earth, and they drank water. Once we saw a male catch an insect.

From June 7 to June 17, the grosbeaks came to the feeders less frequently. Sometimes as much as a day or two passed without a visit from a particular female, but her mate came daily. During this period, although they sometimes came in pairs, the males showed no special attentions to their mates. They all began to take time out from eating to scratch themselves, and there were a few, but obvious, signs of molting.

In the latter half of June the grosbeaks again began to come and go in pairs most of the time. And sometimes they called as they flew in. Scratching increased, and not a few loose feathers were in evidence. Interestingly enough, the males began to offer special attentions to their mates. These were offered and received eagerly. On five occasions (from June 15 to June 27) we saw females being fed seeds and salt-impregnated earth by their mates. Twice we watched a male dance in front of his mate. The females responded with raised crests, fluttering wings, and swinging their bodies from side to side. During this part of June the grosbeaks frequently ate in the same feeder with other birds but never with their own kind — with the exception of their mates. Once, however, on June 18, five grosbeaks (three females and two males) arrived and ate together.

On June 27 we were awakened at five o'clock in the morning by loud and persistent calling. The Evening Grosbeaks had brought their young and were demanding food, which we hurriedly supplied. All that day and until eight in the evening the young were fed. There was so much coming and going from feeders to the trees where the young had been left that it was impossible to tell how many there were. This was particularly so because the juvenals hopped around and even their parents had difficulty in keeping track of them. A returning parent laden with food frequently had to call and keep calling until the missing offspring was discovered and fed. On the second day a few of the young began to follow their parents to the feeders and were fed there.

Both parents fed the young of both sexes, but the degree to which this responsibility was shared varied. In one family the male (Spots) did almost all the feeding. In another, the female fed the young while her mate (Mangy) stood with raised crest and drooping wings daring any other bird to interrupt

that feeding. With the others the feeding seemed to be more or less equally divided between both parents. The young were sometimes fed alternately, but more often one was fed while the others waited their turn.

As that first week drew to a close, a few of the young were feeding themselves just a little (as well as experimenting with twigs, leaves, cones, and even stones!). Feeding by the adults gradually decreased but continued until July 24. As the young were becoming increasingly independent, the adults began to permit other Evening Grosbeaks to eat with them. On one occasion, we watched a juvenal male not only ask for food from two adult males but receive it from both males!

Spots was a most devoted father and fed his three young ones often and daily until July 15, which was the last day he came to our feeders. (We were experiencing a serious shortage of sunflower seeds at that time, and as the competition was very keen Spots may have decided to move his family. Or he may have followed his mate. She had left us five days earlier.) Spots had a most amiable disposition. He rarely chased other birds from the feeders — not even other Evening Grosbeaks. Mangy, on the other hand, seemed to be always in a temper and, with raised crest and drooping wings, lunged fiercely at the other birds, with the result that his family usually had a feeder to themselves. Even when Mangy fed his family he retained this bellicose appearance. On one occasion we saw another male assume the role of peacemaker in a family dispute. He and his mate had been eating together when a juvenal female flew in. The adult female gave her a peck as if to say, "Go away!" The juvenal just sat, so the male hopped over to his mate and fed her, and then he fed the juvenal female. He did this twice, and apparently it worked because all three remained together in the feeder. Another time we watched a pair fly back and forth, always together, from feeder to tree to feed a crying young male. Each gave the young male a mouthful, and then together they returned to the feeder to repeat this performance a number of times.

Toward the end of this feeding period young grosbeaks sometimes tried to take food from the beaks of adults and were gently but firmly not permitted to do so. Once we watched a young male ask and keep asking to be fed, and each time he cried his mother said "churr" quietly but refused to feed him, so he finally fed himself.

We were never absolutely certain about the sizes of the families. Rarely, if indeed ever, did an entire family appear in the same feeder at the same time. Also, a great deal of the feeding took place in trees. However, we saw Spots feed two juvenal females and one juvenal male many times. More often than not they were together. Mangy and his mate fed two young males and one young female. But, as they were not always together, it is possible that there were others. The other parents were seen feeding young of both sexes, but we were never able to be certain of the number.

It is unfortunate that I did not have a bird-banding permit during the summer. However, I was able to observe in detail the plumage and plumage changes of the juvenal Evening Grosbeaks and to examine two of them closely. In the latter instances, one was a male that had been grabbed by a frog in our pond. We tried to rescue him, but it was too late; he was dead when we took him from the frog. A day or so later — July 2, 1953 — a young female stunned herself by banging into a window and spent a good part of that day on my hand or shoulder, as the photograph shows. The patch on her wing is yellowish-white. The young males have the same yellowish-white patch in addition to their larger and truly white patch.

From the time the young were brought to our feeders and until they were on their own, the adult grosbeaks called almost all the time, frequently giving the double-note call. They began to chatter, too, as they left the feeders. But by July 24 the adults were once again coming and going silently most of the time.

During this period of parenthood, although both parents were busy feeding their young the adult males became increasingly attentive to their mates. On that very first day (June 27), while the young were waiting in the trees to be fed we watched an unbanded female swing her body and, with crest raised, flutter her wings while her mate fed her. Almost daily we witnessed one or more adult males feeding their mates. And on five different occasions we watched males dance in front of their mates — even Mangy. But at no time did we see so elaborate a dance as that performed by the male of the first courting pair. All of the males participated in these activities with the exception of Spots. Spots was very attentive and solicitous of his mate and fed her often, but we never saw him dance. For the most part, it seemed to be the females that sought the attentions at this time by swinging their bodies and fluttering their wings in front of the males. Only twice did we observe an indifferent female. Once when a male interrupted his feeding of a juvenile to dance when his mate flew into the feeder, his mate ignored him, so he settled down and ate. Another time we saw a male insist upon feeding his mate although it was quite apparent that she was not interested.

After the young were presumably on their own, the adult males continued to be attentive to their mates for another eleven days. There was no dancing (the last dance that we saw occurred on July 22), but on twelve different occasions males were observed feeding their mates. And, again, the attentions seemed to be sought by the females in most instances. We saw no more of this feeding of the females after August 4, although at least some of the grosbeaks remained paired until August 17.

The departure of the adult grosbeaks was quite gradual. As the young were becoming more and more independent, the adults came to the feeders less frequently and more irregularly. Molting was very much in evidence and some of our identifying marks were lost. But we were able to keep track of the movements of some. Spots and the yellow-banded female had already departed. The aluminum-banded female was not seen from July 22 until August 2, when she appeared with a number of loose tail feathers. That was the last day that we saw her with her mate. After that she came almost daily until August 22. Black Spots was last seen with his mate on August 1. Mangy was with his mate on August 7. He disappeared on the 10th but returned on August 22 for a final visit. He still had the bare spot on his back — the spot that had given him his name. On that day only six or seven adults put in an appearance. The next day the number had dwindled to three (one male and two females). On August 24 one female (possibly two) came twice to the feeders. Five days elapsed and then again one female (possibly two) came twice.

Except for a brief period during the early part of June, the grosbeaks were seldom silent. We heard them call frequently, chatter as they left the feeders, and chirp softly while they ate. But we never heard an Evening Grosbeak sing! It was quite apparent that the male was protective of his mate. If birds needed to be chased from a feeder, it was the male that did the chasing while the female placidly ate. But it was the female that invariably gave the signal for departure. When she flew from the feeder her mate immediately followed.

The adult grosbeaks drank a great deal of water but rarely bathed here, whereas the young grosbeaks bathed frequently. The adults sometimes preened, but we never saw one sun himself — although other birds often did. The grosbeaks seemed more alert, more suspicious and wary, than the other birds that ate in our feeders. Except when feeding their young (and I doubt if anything would have kept them away then), the grosbeaks would rarely come to the feeders if people were in sight. Any change in a feeder was immediately noticed and that feeder was shunned or approached with utmost caution. The other birds seemed oblivious of such changes. If an airplane flew over our house, the grosbeaks would stop eating and listen. When a hawk was around and all the birds flew away, the grosbeaks were the last to return.

And so, with the departure of the last adult on August 29, our first experience of nesting Evening Grosbeaks came to an end. Since then our feeders, with sunflower seeds in plentiful supply, have been visited only by the young grosbeaks and other birds.

Editor's Note. It is of interest that the first report of the breeding of Evening Grosbeaks in New England came from Woodstock, Vermont, only about forty miles from South Londonderry, as recorded by Richard M. Marble in the *Auk*, July, 1926, page 549. Four young grosbeaks were observed with adults, July 12-14, 1926, by E. K. Wright and Mr. Marble. Although no nest was located, the birds, as in the present case, were considered too young to have traveled far.

A Bahaman Hummingbird Episode

By "S. M."

The flight was over and the pigeons of Andros Island in the Bahamas had settled down to their daily ration of poison-berries. Near by a pair of "Goldfinches" (the local name for the Striped-headed Tanager, *Spindalis zena*, found through much of the West Indies), tried to avoid the darting thrusts of a pugnacious hummingbird (the Bahaman Woodstar, *Calliphlox ewelynæ*, with reddish-violet gorget), who objected strenuously to their presence. As one of the Goldfinches fled from his refuge in a small tree, with the tiny bird in hot pursuit, the Woodstar failed to notice a spider web which caught the tip of his left wing.

As he hung dangling sideways from the end of the branch, ten feet in the air, I watched for the spider to administer the death blow. No spider appeared, however, and the little boy beside me said, "Boss-man, I can get him." He ran to a thicket, returning with a stick long enough to reach the bird, whose struggles by this time were growing steadily weaker. As the boy struck at the branch, a Sparrow Hawk flashed by a few feet away but feared the waving stick and missed a tasty breakfast. The hummingbird fell to the ground and the boy laid him on a piece of coral between us. With some difficulty the bird got to his feet and, after several minutes, cleared the web from his shining plumage, took off, and was gone from sight.

The little boy said, "That's God's bird."

"God's bird?" said I.

"Yes, God's bird," said he, "he fly higher than any other."

Well, good luck to him — he had a close call that time.

Sampson's Island—New Audubon Sanctuary

BY ERIC CUTLER

On the south shore of Cape Cod, Cotuit, in Barnstable County, is a small community whose name is associated by most people with the succulent oyster bearing that name. To members of the Massachusetts Audubon Society who are familiar with the breeding grounds of the Common and Least Terns, Cotuit indicates Oyster and Popponesset Bays, where three islands support colonies of these sea birds in varying numbers. These islands, in order of size, are Popponesset, Dead Neck, and Sampson's.

Sampson's Island, the smallest, is readily seen from either Cotuit's Public Landing or Public Beach. Until last spring it had been part of the summer estate of Harry L. Bailey, of Cotuit and New York City. The view from Mr. Bailey's property in Cotuit Highgrounds rewards one with the complete scene of Cotuit Harbor and Sampson's Island. For five years, in the early forties, Mr. Bailey leased the island to the Society and it was returned to his property at the expiration of this lease. Through his kindness, however, Sampson's Island became an addition to the sanctuary responsibilities of the Society when the Board of Directors, at their meeting in April, 1953, accepted it as the eighth wildlife sanctuary.

Originally Sampson's Island, a sixteen-acre area, was separated from Dead Neck by a navigable channel which was used by sailing ships during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. As late as 1904 Mr. Bailey himself had paddled through the channel in a canoe, though it was rapidly filling in at the time. The channel had been altered by dredging — to pass west of Sampson's Island into the inner harbor prior to that time. The channel was redredged in 1948 and the residue, thrown up on the island to form several dunes, has provided a new nesting area for Least and Common Terns.

Just prior to this turn of events, the Common Terns, which before the mid-forties had established a small colony of fifty pairs (give or take ten pairs per season) in the dune grasses near the western tip, had given up their claim to the island nearly *in toto*. Many summer tourists use the western tip of the island as a bathing and picnic beach, and perhaps this had some influence in frightening away the bird life. With the establishment of a sanctuary on the island, these visitors, warned by signs of this bird colony, will be glad to keep out of the nesting area and allow tern life on Sampson's Island to re-establish itself unmolested.

Where the channel between Sampson's Island and Dead Neck cut through, there is now an interesting little lagoon, where ducks and geese, as well as shore birds, may pause to rest and feed. Here during migration may be found such shore birds as Willet, Curlew, and Black-bellied Plover, and in the bayberry thickets of the island Myrtle Warblers will gather. Most of the island is covered with beach grass, a scattering growth of poison ivy, bearberry, and hudsonia, and there is a thicket of small trees consisting mostly of pitch pine, cedar, and scrub oak. In this thicket some of the land birds may at times find shelter.

Interesting bits from the banding experiences of the writer and his aide and daughter, Erica Cutler, on the three islands in the Cotuit Harbor area include records of Arctic Terns, Roseate Terns, Spotted Sandpipers, and Piping Plovers all breeding in the area. The finest record that they have to

report is what is believed to be the life-record of a Least Tern. In July, 1947, Erica — then six years of age — found an adult bird dead on Sampson's (estimated to be only three days dead) with an old band on it. Sent to the Laurel, Maryland, office of the Fish and Wildlife Service, information came back that the bird had been banded as a downy chick on Popponesset Island in Cotuit Harbor (less than a mile from Sampson's) just one week less than twenty one years previously! The bander was Dr. Oliver L. Austin, of the Austin Ornithological Research Station at North Eastham.

Mr. Richard Pigeon, of Cotuit, has agreed to serve as chairman of a sanctuary advisory committee for Sampson's Island, and serving with him on the committee, in addition to the writer, are Alva Morrison, of Cambridge, a director of the Society; Mrs. Donald E. Higgins, of Cotuit, who readers of the *Bulletin* may remember had several Western Tanagers visiting her feeding stations last winter; and Daniel P. Johnson, of Osterville, Executive for the Cape Cod Council of the Boy Scouts of America.

We hope that the acquisition of Sampson's Island will give impetus to the existing interest and vigilance in conserving our wildlife in the Cotuit area.

"So Much for So Little"

Design for the New Year

A glance at the many delightful activities listed by the Society for the coming year reminds us of Little Jack Horner's Christmas pie, and we hope an increasing number of our members will do as Jack did — put in their thumb and pull out a plum. The year is starting off brilliantly with an annual meeting in January that promises to be unusually fine, and one you will not want to miss. If you are an outdoor enthusiast, you will probably check off at once a number of the interesting trips and outings planned. Then there is the lecture program of the Audubon Nature Theatre, featuring favorite photographers and fascinating films. And several new winter and spring courses in bird identification and general nature study, we predict, will appeal to many. There should be something in the list to suit every taste and help make 1954 a Happy Audubon Year for our members as well as attract new friends to the Society.

We welcome a goodly number of new members this month and continue to be deeply grateful for the increased support from members of longer standing.

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Dinner at Annual Meeting

Arrangements have been concluded with Luther Witham, caterer famed for beefsteak pies, to serve a dinner at the Northeastern University Commons on Saturday evening, January 23, from 5:45 to 6:45 P.M. A bountiful meal, with table service, will be provided at a cost of only \$1.75 per plate. Many people were disappointed the past two years at the Annual Meeting because the supper reservations were sold out early in the day. Opportunity is therefore given to use the slip enclosed in this *Bulletin* to make advance reservations. It is especially convenient to be able to hold the Annual Meeting and dine under the same roof. Members and friends should send in orders at once, with remittance, for dinner tickets!

"Audubon's America" at Hartford in February

Members of the Massachusetts Audubon Society living in the Hartford region may be interested in a presentation of the color film "Audubon's America" by C. Russell Mason at a meeting of the Hartford Bird Study Club on Tuesday evening, February 9. This meeting is open to the public and will be held at the headquarters of the Connecticut Historical Society, 1 Elizabeth Street, Hartford, at eight o'clock, and there will be an admission fee. Mr. E. Alexander Bergstrom, 37 Old Brook Road, West Hartford, is in charge of arrangements.

Our Tyrant

BY WYMAN RICHARDSON



ALFRED M. BAILEY AND R. J. NIEDRACH

The sleek little tyrant is one of our farmhouse favorites. He is aptly named *Tyrannus tyrannus*, but he is commonly known as the Eastern Kingbird. Tyrannus is a well-dressed chap, with his glossy black jacket and pure white shirt. But rarely — only when thoroughly excited — will he show his flaming orange cap. Usually he keeps it hidden and displays it only for the benefit of his ladylove.

He is there on the Cape when we arrive in late May, and it is then that he really lets himself out. So exuberant does he become that he skyrockets into the air and then tumbles this way and that, like an oak leaf blown about in the wind. Meanwhile his song comes pouring from him as he seeks to overwhelm his lady sitting sedately near by. Surely a song it is, for the high-pitched, rather piercing squeaks are filled with heartfelt spontaneity and joy.

In June or July, however, he really commands our attention. His nest, carefully constructed in the black alder bush by the side of the little pond hole back of the barn, is now filled with hungry youngsters nearly ready to fly. At almost any time during the day he may be seen sitting at the very top of a cedar cocking his eye this way and that. Suddenly he will dash straight up, and the distinctly audible click of his bill will record the fate of some hapless insect.

I do not know just how many insects it takes to feed his hungry family. I have seen figures reported for other birds, and I am sure in his case the number must be stupendous. At any rate, when I am walking down to the outhouse and a deer fly begins biting the middle of my back in the exact spot I can reach neither from below nor from above, I like to believe that there would have been three flies instead of one were it not for the Kingbird.

But why call him a tyrant? Well, he *is* a tyrant. No bird may safely cross a certain invisible line drawn around his nest. If any should be brash enough to try, then let him beware! It matters not what its size — whether Hummingbird or Eagle — *Tyrannus* is off like a shot and the unlucky bird is badgered and picked at from above until he is glad to escape at a point well away from the tyrant's nest.

One might think that the Kingbird, with his stumpy little wings, would be unable to develop much speed. But just watch him! Only yesterday I saw him race off, come down on top of a Chimney Swift and chase it up and down and around, turning right angle for right angle (or nearly right angle) until at last the Swift reached a dizzy height far away from the sacred nest. Now a Chimney Swift is supposed to be capable of great speed, but our Kingbird seemed to have no difficulty in catching up or in keeping up with this bird. I could not help thinking the little tyrant was doing it just for fun. Certainly a Swift would be one of the most unlikely threats to the safety of the tyrant's little ones.

Crows, always a danger to nesting birds, are his special target. Nor do I feel sorry for the Crows, because they make themselves such a nuisance to other birds — though it is only fair to say their victims are usually birds of prey. Once, through my binocular, I watched *Tyrannus* flying just above a Crow. The Crow was headed away, fast as only a Crow can fly. But the Kingbird flew just as fast, and every once in a while swooped down and actually pecked at the Crow's head. The latter would make a quick little sideslip and then carry on.

Of course an Eagle is easy meat for *Tyrannus*. The only recourse the Eagle has is to soar toward the zenith. This he does with remarkable rapidity, and the little tyrant at last seems to find the atmosphere too rarified for his comfort and plunges earthward, where once again he takes up his vigil.

I have watched Kingbirds harry almost every kind of hawk except those rounded-wing raptors, the Accipiters. I have never seen a Kingbird tackle a Cooper's or a Sharp-shinned Hawk, for example. But neither do I remember seeing him refuse to tackle one of these hawks. My guess is that he would attack such a vicious marauder as gaily, and as successfully, as he does any other winged creature.

And how, you may ask, does he treat his children? Exactly as you might imagine; sternly, strictly, and with absolute fairness. I have watched many other birds feeding their young, and it has always seemed to me that the bird which squealed the loudest, lifted itself up the highest, and opened its mouth the widest was most likely to receive the delectable worm. Certainly it is true that on the approach of a parent most young birds all at once set up a squalling, and all open wide their hungry mouths. It is not so with the young Kingbirds. Once we watched four of the little ones, barely able to fly, arrange themselves in a row on a branch of the scrub willow in front of our house. With great regularity an adult came and fed them. The youngster on the left was the first

to be fed, and it opened its mouth wide in evident anticipation. The other three looked on with obvious interest but made no begging motions at all. Next time the second from the left received the juicy morsel, and so on down the line to the last; and then all over again, from left to right. There was no begging, no squalling, no disorder. There were no fancy "progressive school" ideas here, just a well-disciplined family, and a happy one at that.

I do not know whether both adults accomplished this miracle. It would seem much easier to believe that only one adult was involved, for, according to modern ideas, it is easily possible for one bird to count as far and remember as long as this performance required, but for two to do it successfully seems hard to accept. No, I rather think it was Mrs. Tyrant who was doing the feeding. I rather think Mr. Tyrant was spending most of his time in the air chasing away one and all who might venture too near his precious offspring. Let the Missus feed them; his job was to protect them.

And there he goes, darting and pecking at that big gray Marsh Hawk. It matters not that the hawk, as a good husband should, is only trying to provide for his own family. *He* doesn't drive everybody away. He just tends to his own business.

"Well, go tend to it," says our little tyrant, "but steer clear of this place." And that is exactly what the big gray Marsh Hawk does.

Warblers at Sea

BY DOROTHY E. SNYDER

At 4:30 A.M. on October 12, 1953, the *Sea Dog*, a 48-foot Sportfisherman owned by Watson Curtis of Marblehead, left for a day's fishing, its objective the Middle Banks eighteen miles off the New Hampshire coast. It was to prove a rugged trip even in a boat of this size, since the nor'easter of the previous day had kicked up such a rough sea that a professional sailor of eleven years' experience was seasick for the first time! The 12th itself had showers shortly after midnight and some radiation fog early in the morning; otherwise the weather was partly cloudy, wind NNW, 13 mph; the temperature rising from 46 to 59 by mid-afternoon.

Not long before noon, while the owner and friends were fishing on the Middle Banks, a flock of about twenty Black-poll Warblers appeared, landing on various parts of the boat, including the cod lines over the side. The birds appeared exhausted; two clung to the lines as they were being "jigged" up and down, and one rode up as William Full pulled in a cod, arriving on board just ahead of the fish! Later when the fishermen lunched, a bird sat literally at the feet of James Full, nestled against his shoe.

By 2:00 P.M. it was so rough offshore that the *Sea Dog* hauled anchor and was turned towards home, with the warblers still clinging to the rigging, pump handle, or any convenient perch. During the run back, some of the birds took off and flew around the boat, but returned to it almost immediately. Marblehead Harbor was reached at 4:30 P.M., and after five hours aboard, the Black-polls left and were seen landing on Marblehead Neck. Mr. Curtis reports that similar flocks have taken refuge on his boat a number of times.

The significant points of these observations would seem to be: (1) The fact that the birds boarded the boat when it was eighteen miles from land, and (2) the time of their arrival — midday is an odd time for small land birds which supposedly migrate under the cover of night.

Small Mammals of Arcadia, III. Blarina

BY B. ELIZABETH HORNER AND J. MARY TAYLOR

Illustrations by Kathleen Taylor

Most of us would soon join the fat man in the circus if our appetite were as demanding as that of the shrew. Were our metabolic requirements likewise as demanding, however, we would have not the slightest difficulty in keeping slim despite the most abundant of delicacies. The greatly accelerated pace of the shrew's bodily activities necessitates frequent and ample refueling, and the shrew, which is actually one of the smallest mammals ever to exist, devotes much of its time simply to arresting its ravenous appetite.

This short-lived, highly energetic little mammal belongs to the order Insectivora, although it relishes a far more variable menu than insects alone can supply. Its seemingly insatiable appetite is appeased by earthworms, slugs, lizards, and small mammals, as well as by insects. A toxic substance released in the bite of certain shrews appears to paralyze the prey and enables the shrew to overcome animals considerably larger than itself. Although chiefly carnivorous, it may consume some vegetable matter as well; and in live-trapping studies, such as those conducted at the Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary, shrews are often found in traps baited with rolled oats and sunflower seeds. In captivity, shrews have even been known to thrive on dog biscuits!



Shrews are found in all major temperate and tropical regions of the world except Australia. In North America they compete with White-footed Mice in being among the most abundant of small mammals. The particular kind of shrew found at Arcadia, the Short-tailed Shrew, *Blarina brevicauda* ranges throughout the eastern United States, extending as far west as North Dakota and Texas. As both its common and scientific names indicate, this shrew possesses a short tail, the length of which is less than half that of head and body combined. As an adult this animal measures about six inches from the tip of its nose to the tip of its tail.

Although frequently described as mouselike in general appearance, the Short-tailed Shrew can readily be distinguished from its murine neighbors. Its pin-point eyes and uniformly gray fur, or pelage, set it apart immediately from the large-eyed, white-footed peromyscus. Its well-concealed ears and short tail prevent confusion with the House Mouse; and its pointed muzzle, short silky fur, and five-toed front feet serve to separate it from the Meadow Mouse. There would perhaps be more justification for confusing the shrew with a mole than a mouse. All shrews and moles are very closely related, and soft, short, dense fur characterizes both groups of animals. *Blarina*, however, may be distinguished from the moles by its chestnut-tipped teeth and its comparatively slender forefeet. The front feet of moles are highly modified into the broad, shovel-like organs associated with their extensive subterranean digging operations.

The Short-tailed Shrew occurs in a variety of habitats throughout its range, although seeming to prefer dark and damp places whenever available.



It frequents areas of long grass, brushy regions, stream banks, and heavy forests. One of its favorite dwelling places is woodland characterized by ample leaf litter and friable earth. The combination of leaf litter and loose underlying soil provides an ideal medium for tunneling; and here the shrew, utilizing the layer of surface material both as home and hunting ground, preys upon other small creatures which are similarly taking advantage of this protective blanket. Consequently, al-

though the shrew is one of the few small mammals markedly active by day as well as by night, it is surprising that we rarely see this animal in nature. Not only is it so small as easily to pass by unnoticed, but its activities in leaf litter and brush usually keep it hidden from even the sharpest pair of eyes.

Where habitat conditions are especially favorable, blarina populations may reach a density of approximately twenty-five individuals per acre. Parental duties usually commence in early spring, and it is thought that a single female may have as many as three litters between then and mid-autumn. There is undoubtedly much variation in the size of litters, although litters containing six or seven young are not unusual. Beginning life as a creature no larger than a peanut and no heavier than a dime, the shrew grows rapidly; and by the age of two weeks it has become fully furred and is able to crawl about. In another week or more its eyes are open, and soon it is able to forage for itself. From this time on the shrew must be constantly on the alert, not only to capture food for itself, but to avoid becoming food for something else. Owls and hawks swoop down upon shrews as well as upon mice, and weasels and foxes likewise give chase.

Question has arisen from time to time regarding the sociability of the shrew, and blarina has frequently been cited as being very aggressive, even fatally so, toward other blarinas. On the other hand, captive shrews have been known to live together compatibly, and in nature two shrews are sometimes found occupying the same burrow. It may well be, therefore, that the shrew is far more sociable than many investigators have realized. Possibly, too, its social behavior is facilitated by a characteristic odor which it imparts to the various objects with which it comes in contact. The shrew has a remarkably keen sense of smell, and the odor trail may constitute a highly important device whereby one shrew relays to others information as to where it has been, how recently it has been there, its sex, its age, and perhaps even its more precise personal identification. Another function sometimes attributed to the odor-producing, or musk, glands is that of deterring would-be predators.

The musk glands of blarina are not to be confused, however, with its poison glands. The former are scent-producing glands located in the skin; while the latter are salivary glands and are situated within the mouth. Recent studies indicate that the poison of blarina is similar to that of the cobra. In both animals the poison assists not only in overcoming the prey, but also in digesting the large amount of protein in the diet.

One of the most exciting of all adventures with *Blarina brevicauda* is that described almost fifty years ago by a man who has since become internation-

ally known for his work in genetics and evolution. As an undergraduate at the University of Michigan, A. Franklin Shull became mystified one winter by finding on the snow not far from campus numerous small heaps of snail shells. His natural curiosity posed one question after another. Why were some of the shells occupied by snails and others not? What animal had heaped them there? Why were there no tracks leading to or from the shells? Why were the piles small on some days and large on others? These were far more than the questions of an idle speculator; for no sooner had he asked them than he was busy devising ingeniously simple schemes for answering them.

It was not long before Shull discovered that each heap was located at the mouth of a small burrow within which lived a shrew, and that the shrew was moving the shells. By attaching individual shells to thread wound onto home-made reels, he learned that shells, when moved from the surface during the night, were carried into the burrow. Next he wrote numbers on all of the shells located above ground, and for two months he kept records of those comprising each heap. By adding embalmed snails and sand-filled shells to the heaps he experimented with the ability of the shrew to distinguish living snails from facsimiles. He excavated burrows and nests, mapped them with great precision, and transferred their occupants to the laboratory in order to observe them more closely. In excavating in reasonably dry ground he used small hand bellows to blow flour into a burrow and then opened it as far as the walls had been whitened; and this same procedure was repeated as often as necessary to expose the entire burrow system. Wherever the ground was too wet for the flour to retain its whiteness, he extended a heavy rubber tube into the burrow to guide his digging. The shrews removed from the burrows and taken into the laboratory were studied with reference to their manner of burrowing, their food preferences and requirements, and their methods of distinguishing occupied snail shells from empty ones.

Following every available clue with the most careful observation and appropriate experimentation, he soon pieced together the following story. During winter the shrew hoarded large numbers of snails for use as food. These snails were hoarded, in general, in the coldest place available, which, in cold weather, was above ground and, in warmer weather, below ground. The cold storage served primarily to keep the snails immobile so that they would not crawl away. Although the shrew often carried empty snail shells to the surface, it rarely carried them into the burrow again. Consequently, the number and disposition of shells found at the burrow entrance at any given time depended upon both the cold-storage facilities as dictated by the weather and the housekeeping propensities of the shrew. To what extent *blarina* made its own underground burrows and to what extent it appropriated those of the Meadow Mouse, Shull was unable to determine; but he did find that *blarina* was far less fussy than its neighbor the Meadow Mouse in the matter of nest construction, being very unlikely to shred into fine pieces the leaves and other readily available nest-building vegetation. Correlating outdoor and indoor experimentation, he concluded that the shrew, because of its great difficulty in breaking the shells of mature snails of certain species, broke such shells only as a last resort, when a snail could not be dragged out through the shell aperture. He was still puzzled, however, as to how the shrew distinguished occupied shells from unoccupied ones, and it was not until he had performed several additional experiments that he was able to conclude that the distinction was based chiefly on the odor of the snail. Thus ended the "Case of the Provident Shrew" as solved by Detective Shull!

PROGRAM

ANNUAL MEETING

Massachusetts Audubon Society

Saturday, January 23, 1954 Northeastern University Auditorium, Boston

360 Huntington Ave., opp. Boston Opera House

JUDGE ROBERT WALCOTT, *presiding*

Afternoon Session

- 2:00 SEAL ISLAND. Color film with sound. Disney Studios.
- 2:20 Annual Business Meeting. Including reports of progress during 1953.
- 2:50 MOOSE HILL WILDLIFE SANCTUARY. Presented by Albert W. Bussewitz, Sharon, Sanctuary Director. An exhibit of photographs of Moose Hill and its activities by Mr. Bussewitz will also be provided.
- 3:00 "HERE COMES THE AUDUBON TEACHER!" A peek inside Audubon classes in Conservation. Presented by Mrs. Thelma Marshall, Swansea, member of the Audubon educational staff.
- 3:15 LITTLE BLIND RIDING HOOD. A playlet by Mrs. Maxwell E. Foster, Ipswich.
- 3:30 Pause to get acquainted, to see exhibits, and to meet the Audubon staff.
- 4:00 THE ADVENTURE OF NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY AT QUABBIN. (Illustrated) Presented by Leslie Campbell, Belchertown.
- 4:30 PUFFINS AT MACHIAS SEAL ISLAND. Color motion pictures by Robert E. Jackson, Marblehead, with comment by Torrey Jackson.
- 4:45 LIVING BIRDS IN THREE DIMENSIONS. (Illustrated) Presented by G. Blake Johnson, Framingham.
- 5:15 AUDUBON CAMERAS "CLICKED" IN 1953. Selected kodachromes by Audubon members. (Limited to five slides per person)
- 5:45 to 6:45 WITHAM CATERED DINNER in Northeastern University Commons. Price \$1.75 (inc. tax and gratuities).

Evening Session

- 7:00 ORNITHOLOGICAL HIGHLIGHTS OF 1953. Two-minute presentations by Audubon members — as in previous years, by popular demand. Some of the birds rare to Massachusetts observed during the year will be included.
- 7:30 OCEANIC BIRDS WITH A CAMERA GUN. Color motion pictures. Presented by Richard Borden, Concord.
- 7:45 PHANTOM OF THE MARSHES. Color motion picture, with sound of the rare Everglade Kite, an endangered species. By Bayard Read, Rye, N. Y.
- 8:00 WILDLIFE DOWN UNDER. Presented in kodachrome by Allan Keast, Curator of Birds and Reptiles, Australian Museum, Sydney, New South Wales.

EXHIBITS: A recent bust of AUDUBON, by Joy Buba, New York sculptress and member of the Massachusetts Audubon Society. Photographs by Torrey Jackson and David Tucker. Photographs of Audubon sanctuaries and of the Audubon educational program.

Hostesses

Mrs. Donald C. Alexander	Mrs. Roger Ernst	Mrs. John B. May
Mrs. Clarence E. Allen	Mrs. Maxwell E. Foster	Mrs. Rosario Mazzeo
Mrs. Oakes I. Ames	Mrs. Ludlow Griscom	Mrs. Lawrence K. Miller
Mrs. Richard Borden	Mrs. Philip B. Heywood	Mrs. Alva Morrison
Mrs. Elliott B. Church	Miss Louisa Hunnewell	Mrs. James F. Nields, Jr.
Mrs. G. W. Cottrell, Jr.	Mrs. Edwin C. Johnson	Mrs. John Richardson
Mrs. Lee W. Court	Mrs. Ralph Lawson	Mrs. Sydney M. Williams
Mrs. Eric Cutler	Mrs. C. Russell Mason	

Annual Winter Field Trip to North Shore

Sunday, January 24

(See notice elsewhere in *Bulletin*)



HAL H. HARRISON



ROGER TORY PETERSON



LAUREL REYNOLDS



ROBERT HERMES

Audubon Nature Theatre

SATURDAY 10:30 A.M.

NEW ENGLAND MUTUAL HALL

Boston

"Atlantic Adventures" Feb. 13

Special Season Ticket

On sale for Boston series
until January 23

Adult \$3.60 Youth \$1.80
tax inc.

**FOUR FEATURES
FOR PRICE OF THREE!**

"Wild America" Feb. 20

SINGLE ADMISSIONS

After January 23 only singles
will be sold

Adult \$1.20 Youth \$.60
tax inc.

"Western Discovery" Mar. 13

Other showings in Worcester,
Beverly, Attleboro, Newbury-
port, Northampton, and the
Pittsfield and Barre areas.

**For further information and tickets,
write to:**

**Audubon Nature Theatre
155 Newbury St., Boston**

"The Grass Forest" Mar. 20

Thumbnail Sketches of Our Vice-Presidents



Shortly after he moved from the New York City region to Dalton, Massachusetts, in 1940, ROBERT CRANE became affiliated with Pleasant Valley Wildlife Sanctuary and its program and was president of the Sanctuary Association when transfer of the property was made to the Massachusetts Audubon Society in 1950. Since then he has served actively as chairman of the Sanctuary Advisory Committee. In close co-operation with Director Sanborn, he has sparked a membership drive in the Berkshire region, also many physical improvements for Pleasant Valley to make the Sanctuary more enjoyable and educational to visitors.

He has taken time to encourage the annual Audubon campout in the Berkshires and other gatherings, such as the annual covered dish supper at Pleasant Valley, which fill the Barn restaurant to capacity with members and their friends. It was a pleasant surprise early one morning last June, during the Audubon Teachers Conference on Mt. Greylock, to have Robert Crane and his college classmate Philip B. Heywood, of Worcester, appear in time for breakfast with the group, both men having slipped away briefly while attending their fortieth reunion at Williams College.

Mr. Crane was born November 17, 1891, in New York City. Ten years later his family moved to Pelham Manor, New York, and there he attended school and, through the teachings of his mother, early became interested in birds and the out-of-doors in that fine country area. These interests continued through his college and succeeding years.

Mr. Crane's work with the New York office of the Champion Paper and Fibre Company was interrupted by World War I, when he enlisted in the Navy as a second class seaman. After various assignments, he secured an ensign's commission and served on the *U.S.S. George Washington* until the Armistice was signed.

Mr. Crane was married in 1919, shortly after his discharge from the Navy, and resumed his connection with the paper business. He became affiliated with the Byron Weston Company as their New York representative in 1928, and in 1940 was called to their home office in Dalton to take charge of the sales department. At the present time he is vice-president in charge of sales and secretary of the company.

The Cranes have one married son and two grandchildren. A younger son, an officer in the Marines, lost his life at Okinawa during World War II.

C.R.M.

Thumbnail Sketches of Our Vice-Presidents



In the nature field, there is probably no better known name among children and their parents than that of THORNTON W. BURGESS. Since 1912 his syndicated bedtime nature stories have appeared in newspapers throughout the United States and Canada.

Mr. Burgess was born and received his early education in Sandwich, Massachusetts, the town where his Pilgrim ancestor, Thomas Burge, settled in 1637, and many of his later stories were written about interesting mammals, like the raccoon and the skunk, which were attracted to the home of "Aunt Sally," one of his old friends in that neighborhood. For many years he has lived in Springfield, Massachusetts, and his

country home, "Laughing Brook," in near-by Hampden continues to provide him with material and inspiration for his enthusiastic and vigorous stories of animal and bird life.

Thornton Burgess began his notorial career with the Phelps Publishing Company, but since 1911 he has been an independent writer. In 1938 he was awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters by Northeastern University.

Although Mr. Burgess is especially well known for his stories in the Bedtime, Old Mother West Wind, Green Forest, and Smiling Pool series, he is also the author of several children's books on wildlife — on birds, flowers, animals, and seashore life.

During his busy career, he also found time to lecture to many organizations and to carry on photographic studies in both still and motion pictures. Those who have followed the programs of the Audubon Nature Theatre through the years will remember the great crowds that turned out to hear and see Mr. Burgess, and one morning program in Boston in recent years had to be repeated in order to accommodate all who came. His characterizations have made it natural for most of us to think of the Blue Jay as Sammy, the Red Fox as Reddy, and the meadow mouse as Danny. His writings have been translated into many languages.

Although approaching his eightieth year, Thornton Burgess continues to write professionally and has made several expeditions in recent winters to Tobago in the West Indies. We know that he will never lose his enthusiasm, nor will his readers, for his furred and feathered friends.

Mr. Burgess has been twice married. His first wife was Nina E. Osborne, of West Springfield, and they had one son, Thornton W. Burgess. In 1911 he was married to Fannie P. Johnson, of Ithaca, New York.

C.R.M.

Sanctuary Notes for November

COOK'S CANYON. November 7 brought to Barre, not only the first snow of the season, but also wind, sleet, and hail. In short, it was hardly the day to anticipate any large per cent of the bird banders scheduled to hold their annual meeting at Cook's Canyon that day. A true optimist, Mr. Mason arrived early and helped us in preparing for the physical comfort of those who might brave the weather. A blazing fire in the oversize fireplace in "The Ledges" (the Florence Read Dining Hall), a little extra heat in the soup preceding the ham dinner, and the guests — 90 per cent of those who made reservations — seemed to forget the winds whistling in the spruces. Allan Keast's kodachromes of Australian birds highlighted the program. Other features of the meeting were Mrs. Benjamin Shaub's latest reports of the Evening Grosbeak Survey and Charles Huntington's illustrated talk on taxonomic problems.

An enthusiastic and well-attended meeting of the Sanctuary Advisory Committee, with Levon Yacubian presiding, was held on the same day. The principal discussion centered about the immediate physical needs of the Sanctuary, especially the shingling of the walls of "The Ledges" in time for next summer's program.

More bird feeders are spotting the neighborhood — a sure sign that winter has arrived. The food is available, but where are the Purple Finches and the Evening Grosbeaks? The month of November has passed without the return of these favorites, yet Audubon Society members in North Brookfield, Belcher-town, and Ware report their presence. Barre can expect their arrival at any moment — a welcome addition to the ever-present Chickadees and Blue Jays.

Our many friends are bringing us "Skippy" type (wide-mouthed) peanut butter jars. Since the Wildwood Camp enrollment has increased for the 1954 season, additional jars will be needed. With your help, "Operation: PB Jars for Crafts" continues.

The thousand shrubs which the Soil Conservation Service has given us are heeled in for the winter, waiting to be planted around the Sanctuary in the spring. They will not only increase the supply of wildlife food and shelter but will beautify the grounds.

Christmas will be over when this reaches our members, but let us continue "Christmas for the Birds" at least until the winter storms have ceased.

DAVID R. MINER

IPSWICH RIVER. The end of November and at last the heavy rains have swollen the river brimful and flooded the marshes. Green-winged Teal, Black Ducks, and Wood Ducks frequent that area. Again this year a Great Blue Heron is staying on. As late as the 16th, Painted Turtles were basking in the warmth of the November sun. Not being endowed by Nature with the means for making the trip to the tropics for the winter, they find it easier to go a foot or so toward China and bury in the warm mud of the river bottom. The glorious weather of the third week brought out pussy willows and red maple buds; skunk cabbage was unfolding its green cloak. A late Phoebe was seen on the 27th in company with three Bluebirds and some twenty Robins. A high count of over fifty Snipe was reported from the Idlewood Brook marsh on the Sanctuary.

There are no trees more beautiful at any season than the tulip trees, *Liriodendron tulipifera*. Their symmetrical form, tall and straight, with erect

candle-like fruits on the tips of the upper branches that remain all winter, always brings me to a halt in my walks to admire them. Often many Purple Finches are busy pulling out the winged seeds, twittering between times.

Two other trees have had many admirers and requests for information about them. The Osage orange, *Maclura pomifera*, grows here to a height of forty feet. It is an irregularly growing tree, very thorny, with lustrous green foliage turning to yellow in the autumn and with orange-brown branches. It is a "foreign-looking" tree. Its remarkable chartreuse oranges, three to six inches in diameter, are unique. Visitors pick them up from the ground and bring them to the office for identification. They proudly bear them home when told that their cedarlike aroma is insect-repellent. I understand that Crossbills will peck out the seeds, and we shall be watching for them this winter. However, the squirrels and children have already made a good harvest of these "green cannon balls."

A truly beautiful specimen of a Korean mountain ash, *Sorbus alnifolia*, about thirty feet high, has intrigued everyone. Its manner of growth is similar to that of its cousin the shadbush, upright with dense branches. Its fruit is very striking, coral-colored berries about three eighths of an inch in diameter. Introduced in this country in 1892, it is apparently still a rare tree here and one that certainly should be grown more. We plan to propagate it by cuttings. To see it thronged with Myrtle Warblers, Robins, and Cedar Waxwings on a warm autumn day in the bright sunlight was a joy.

A Pied-billed Grebe continues his sojourn at the Rockery Pond, creating a constant Japanese print as he steers about the lily pads from one artistic pose to another.

Two Dickcissels have joined the crowd at the feeders, and we welcome the return of two White-breasted Nuthatches. These little gnomes that can cling to the underside of branches like flies on the ceiling, and with equal ease come down the trunk head first, afford constant entertainment. Inquisitive, friendly but with reservations, with a greeting of *Quank, Quank*, they remain close by most of the season.

For those who like to "sit a while," (and who doesn't?) benches have been put up at a few spots along the marshside trail. The trails are all in good shape and offer pleasant winter walks. The comfortable porch is always open for those who wish to warm up after a walk and for those who just want to sit and watch the birds at the feeders.

ELMER FOYE

MOOSE HILL. October and November are the "crazy season" of the Ruffed Grouse, and that fact is borne out by the several dead birds that were reported or brought to the Sanctuary — mute testimony to the anomalous behavior of this well-known cock of the woods. There seems available no wholly satisfactory explanation to account for the frequency with which these birds crash head on into trees, buildings, and automobiles at this time of the year. Even when freed from hunting pressures there are always certain numbers of these drummers that are victimized by this annually recurring and mystifying maladjustment. It's a problem well worth probing into by the students of bird behavior, and possibly some day measures may be devised to reduce the mortality and accident rate. As the month of December comes along it is unlikely that further casualties will be brought to our attention.

During November there was noted little marked change in the bird life

at Moose Hill. There were no unusual visitors and only slight change among the "regulars" observed at this season. As the warm days became less frequent, the numbers of visitors to the feeders and the frequency of their visits increased markedly and more generous helpings of the Moose Hill Mixture were in order. A small group of Mourning Doves continued to stay with us and may be expected to overwinter safely if the tradition of past years is followed. Chickadees, Juncos, and Purple Finches were the most commonly observed species. Among the last-named variety there occurred a single individual with an all-white head. This albinistic trait imparted to the bird a clownish appearance which made him very conspicuous at the feeders. Even from casual observation it appeared that, whatever pigments may have been lacking in the investiture of his head, there was no indication of impoverishment of appetite.

As a simple and effective feeding device for attracting birds, the so-called peanut, or hurricane, log has long been regarded as one of the best of its type. Replenishment of the pendant sticks has always been a daily ritual at Moose Hill, and on many wintry days a midday refill has been necessary to accommodate the multitude of sharpened avian appetites. Most frequent and popular visitors are the always engaging Chickadees — feathered mites that radiate personality in a manner and degree almost unsurpassed by any other member of the bird clan. They are invariably the first to find the logs in the gray light of early morning and among the last to probe their contents at dusk. Not until one night last week was it disclosed that peanut logs might serve to attract wildlife after dark — not necessarily bird life, but "flyers" of another sort. It was shortly after darkness on the night of the 30th that a casual glance at one of the feeders hanging outside of our kitchen window, dimly illuminated by the light over the sink, revealed the furred form of one of nature's most expert gliders, a Flying Squirrel, busily battenning his ogle-eyed self on the buttered log. A flashlight beam on its flattened tail and bewhiskered face served to identify it unmistakably, and a hurried exposure with a Kalart flash camera made its presence a matter of permanent record.

In last month's Sanctuary notes we had all but put our Chipmunks to bed for the winter, but apparently it was but a brief nap (on the part of the Chipmunks!) that removed them from observation. With the unseasonable balminess of the last days of November they have been reactivated and are again replenishing their subterranean larders against the time when December snows and icy blasts will rout them from the Sanctuary scene with swiftness and finality.

ALBERT W. BUSSEWITZ

ARCADIA. During the summer, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Flynt, of Cincinnati, visited Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary. Somehow or other the talk got around to "paw-paws." Possibly it was in connection with the appearance several times recently in the Connecticut Valley of Opossums, for the fruit of the paw-paw is a favorite with our native marsupial. Anyway, Mrs. Flynt remembered the Sanctuary this fall and sent along five small paw-paw plants. We have tried the species before, but not with much success. But with Mrs. Flynt's five specimens in the nursery, we shall try again. We can dream, after the manner of all gardeners, imagining a well-formed small tree heavy with fruit, with a Possum draped on a branch, his tail curled for added safety as he feeds on the ripe fruits.

During the month we also received at the Sanctuary still another collection of books in the natural history field from "A Friend of Arcadia." Included in the group was *Our Wild Orchids*, by Frank Morris and Edward A. Eames. This is a reminder that the plea for assistance with our wildflower and fern garden was answered, for Mrs. Ruth Cotton and a committee of the Hampshire County Garden Club came forward with an offer of help. So our hopes for a real collection of the rarer wildflowers and ferns is a little nearer realization.

Another interesting gift came from Dr. Armand Trudeau in the form of two pairs of Bob-white Quail and a fine pen in which to winter them. If these birds come through the winter well, it would seem worth while to see if they could breed in the wild. The Bob-white was once present in the Valley but has long since disappeared, except for accidental stragglers. The chances are that there can be no halfway mark with the Bob-white in this northern limit of its range. Recent research indicates that large coveys are necessary if the species is to go through severe cold weather, small ones not producing sufficient body heat. At Arcadia there is now adequate food for the gathering through the wintertime, with varied cover which should make possible the survival of the species if coveys can go into winter with enough members to insure a safety margin when the winter cold presses down on them.

A very old, miscellaneous collection of birds' eggs came to us via David Riedel, Chairman of the Arcadia Advisory Committee. It would seem very worth while to have the collection gone over by an expert to ascertain if it contains material which should find its way into a study collection. It is fortunate that the urge to collect wild birds' eggs no longer activates budding naturalists, and that egg collections usually are now found only in the nether regions of natural history museums.

Davis Crompton surveyed the Sanctuary on November 29. He found forty-four Mallards, which is a high number indeed for this species. Blacks numbered 320, which comes extremely close to the 350 estimated as leaving Arcadia Marsh on the evening of the 28th. The lone Gadwall first logged on October 14, and observed several times by Professor Eliot, was still present on November 29, when it was listed as a female. One Pintail and one Green-winged Teal also were recorded on Davis Crompton's list. A lone Wood Duck was seen flying out at dusk on the 27th, which is a fairly late date; as was the 28th for a Killdeer. Professor Eliot observed a Great Blue Heron and a Myrtle Warbler at Arcadia on November 11, and a Kingfisher on November 19. Small songbirds seem few in numbers; certainly they are not resorting to the feeders as usual. The Brown Creeper did show up on the 29th for the first time, and three Golden-crowned Kinglets were still present on that date. But, all in all, the numbers and variety of birds present is disappointing. Under such circumstances we have to turn and look at the newly hung 1954 Northwestern Mutual calendar to be cheered by Audubon's picture of the Cardinal — and hope. We can always hope, thanks be!

EDWIN A. MASON

From the Editors' Sanctum

January, 1954



" . . . Piped a tiny voice hard by,
Gay and polite, a cheerful cry,
Chic-chic-a-dee-dee! Saucy note
Out of sound heart and merry throat,
As if it said 'Good day, good sir!
Fine afternoon, old passenger!
Happy to meet you in these places
Where January brings few faces.' "

Times have certainly changed since Emerson penned these lines to "The Titmouse," and today the winter woods and fields, forests and shores are well populated with bird watchers and other nature lovers and conservationists. But the ever-friendly, ever-cheerful little Chickadee is still today one of our commonest, as it is certainly one of our most popular American wild birds wherever it is encountered.

Of the thousands of bird feeding stations maintained every winter throughout the extensive range of the Black-capped Chickadee and its close kin of the Titmouse Family, there are probably few, if any, which are not patronized by these delightful little feathered friends. We step out to our feeding place with a new ration of sunflower seeds, peanut hearts, suet, or peanut butter, and the Chickadees are waiting close at hand, calling to each other and greeting us at the same time. We move back a pace or two, and the birds are already picking up the proffered food. And how many of us have held out a choice tidbit and had the feathered mites perch on our fingers to eat from our open palms! Those who have had this experience will never forget the thrill as the friendly birds come so readily to our bounty.

With the coming of winter, activities at our several wildlife sanctuaries do not cease. Human visitors are always welcome, but their numbers diminish. Among our feathered friends, populations change with the seasons, but our feeding stations are, of course, kept amply supplied at all times with the famous Moose Hill Mixture and other types of foods favored by our winter residents, and they are well patronized. And our sanctuary directors are constantly busy, for, added to their regular duties at the sanctuary headquarters, they are all actively connected with our educational program of Conservation and Natural Science in the schools of their respective areas, teaching classes, giving special courses in bird study, and answering the many questions which naturally arise in connection with their contributions to this valuable feature of the program of the Massachusetts Audubon Society.

We need have no fear that we are pauperizing the birds when we offer them our bounty. Try to follow a Chickadee after its visit to a feeding station. Does it perch idly until its hunger is again aroused? Or does it not, rather, spend an interval hunting dormant insects in the near-by shrubbery, destroying tent caterpillar eggs on the nearest apple trees, or scanning the eaves of our houses for spiders and other concealed bits of its favorite natural foods? Without man's help many small birds would, of course, survive the winter, but others would succumb to a meager diet combined with seasonal cold or, barely surviving, would continue to exist in a weakened condition.

So the Chickadees call to the Nuthatch, "Come,"
And the Downies on a dead branch drum,
And the Finches bright and the Junco gray,
All join the throng on this wintry day,
And chirp their thanks for the food we spread —
The seeds and suet and crumbs of bread.

J. B. M.

Audubon Calendar — 1954

January 23	2:00-10:00 P.M. ANNUAL MEETING. Northeastern University Auditorium.
January 24	AUDUBON FIELD TRIP by bus to Newburyport, Cape Ann.
January 26	First meeting of INTRODUCTORY COURSE IN BIRD WATCHING. Audubon House, 7:30 P.M. Continues on succeeding Tuesdays until March 16.
February 13	"ATLANTIC ADVENTURES." Color film by Hal H. Harrison. New England Mutual Hall, Boston, 10:30 A.M.*
February 14	AUDUBON FIELD TRIP by bus to Newburyport, Cape Ann.
February 20	"WILD AMERICA." Color film by Roger Tory Peterson. New England Mutual Hall, Boston, 10:30 A.M.*
March 13	"WESTERN DISCOVERY." Color film by Laurel Reynolds. New England Mutual Hall, Boston, 10:30 A.M.*
March 14-20	FLOWER SHOW. Mechanics Hall, Boston. Visit the Audubon booth.
March 16	"THE THREE KINGDOMS" (Morning Course). An Introductory Adult Course in Nature Study. Audubon House, 10:00 A.M. Meets on succeeding Tuesdays through May 18.
March 20	"THE GRASS FOREST." Color film by Robert Hermes. New England Mutual Hall, Boston, 10:30 A.M.*
March 28	AUDUBON FIELD TRIP by bus to Sudbury Valley.
March 31	First Meeting ADVANCED BIRD IDENTIFICATION COURSE. Audubon House, 7:30 P.M. Continues on succeeding Wednesdays through May 19.
April 6	"THE THREE KINGDOMS" (Evening Course). An Introductory Adult Course in Nature Study. Audubon House, 7:30 P.M. Meets on succeeding Tuesdays through May 18.
April 8	"THE WEB OF LIFE." Intermediate Natural Science Course. Audubon House, 7:30 P.M. Meets on succeeding Thursday evenings through May 20.
April 14	First meeting ELEMENTARY COURSE IN BIRD IDENTIFICATION at Ipswich River Wildlife Sanctuary, Topsfield. 8:00 P.M. Continues on succeeding Wednesdays through May 12.
April 25	AUDUBON FIELD TRIP by bus to Westport.
May 3-9	AUDUBON WEEK.
May 8	AUDUBON DAY. State-wide Audubon Walks.
May 8	OPEN HOUSE AT AUDUBON SANCTUARIES.
May 3-14	BOSTON PUBLIC GARDEN WALKS. A leader will be on hand to point out birds from 12:30 to 1:30 P.M.
May 14-16	CONNECTICUT VALLEY CAMPOUT.
May 23	AUDUBON FIELD TRIP by bus to North Shore.
June 4-6	BERKSHIRE CAMPOUT.
June 6-8	AUDUBON TEACHERS CONFERENCE.
June —	NATURAL SCIENCE WORKSHOP. Exact dates to be announced.
July 4 - August 14	WILDWOOD NATURE CAMP.
August 15	AUDUBON FIELD TRIP by automobile to Crane's Beach, Ipswich.
September 8-9	AUDUBON TEACHERS CONFERENCE.
September 10-12	CAPE CAMPOUT.
October 17	AUDUBON FIELD TRIP by bus to Essex County.
November 21	AUDUBON FIELD TRIP by bus to Newburyport and Cape Ann.

*These programs also scheduled in other cities and towns. Watch for local announcements during February and March.

Know Your Birds

Adult Education Courses at Audubon House

Two courses in bird identification will be given this season at Audubon House. The first, **AN INTRODUCTION TO BIRD WATCHING**, will be held on eight Tuesday evenings, 7:30 to 9:00, from January 26 to March 16, and will include two Saturday field trips, February 6 and March 6. This course offers a beginner's introduction to identification and enjoyment of birds at the feeder and in field observation. The identification of seventy-five common birds of Massachusetts will be treated thoroughly. Through use of slides, records, mounted specimens, and field trips, the techniques of knowing birds will be explained. The instructor will be Miss Frances Sherburne. Fee, \$8.50 (field trip transportation extra).

The second course, **ADVANCED BIRD IDENTIFICATION**, will be held on eight Wednesday evenings, 7:30 to 9:00, from March 31 to May 19, and will include two Saturday field trips, April 10 and May 1. This course is offered for those familiar with a number of birds but who wish to make a more specialized study of the various groupings of birds and develop further skill in field identification. Under divisions such as Ducks and Geese, Shore Birds, Hawks and Owls, Warblers, and Sparrows, three hundred birds will be introduced. One session will be devoted to Bird Song. Specialists on the Audubon staff will present the course, and the field trips with these experienced leaders will be especially helpful.

Beginning in March and April, Miss Frances Sherburne will conduct additional Adult Education Courses: "The Three Kingdoms: An Introduction to Nature Study" and "The Web of Life: Intermediate Natural Science." Watch the *Bulletin* for full details.

Audubon Field Trips

SUNDAY, JANUARY 24. To Newburyport and Cape Ann. Two chartered busses will leave Audubon House, 155 Newbury Street, Boston, at 8:15 A.M., returning to Audubon House at 7:00 P.M. One bus will cover Cape Ann and the other bus the Newburyport area. Those who wish to specify a choice of bus may do so, and assignments will be made up to the capacity of each bus. At the end of the trip, both busses will meet at Ipswich River Sanctuary, where coffee and doughnuts will be served. Bring lunch. Fare and guide fee, \$3.00. Fee for those using private cars and following busses, 75 cents per person.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 24. Trip to Cape Ann for winter birds. Chartered bus will leave Audubon House, 155 Newbury Street, Boston, at 8:15 A.M., returning to Audubon House at 7:00 P.M. Bring lunch. Fare and guide fee, \$3.00. Fee for those using private cars and following busses, 75 cents per person. *NOTE: Reservations for above trips should be made in advance, and if by telephone before 5:00 P.M. Cancellations cannot be accepted after noon on the Friday preceding date of trip.*

Annual Conference, Trustees of Public Reservations

January 20, 1954

Those of our members who have hiked, for bird watching or other purposes, over any portion of the famed Appalachian Trail, which "hits the high spots" from Katahdin in Maine to Mt. Oglethorpe in Georgia, an over-all distance of slightly more than two thousand scenic miles, will be interested

to know that Benton MacKaye, who first conceived the idea for this great pathway, is to be honored by the award, by the Trustees of Public Reservations, of their Conservation Medal in recognition of his distinguished service for conservation. The award will be made at the annual luncheon for trustees, members, and invited guests of that organization, at the Sheraton Plaza Ballroom, Copley Square, Boston, January 20, 1954. At the luncheon, which will be held at 1:00 P.M., in addition to the award of this medal there will be an address by Arthur T. Lyman, Commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Natural Resources, on "Conservation in Massachusetts," and there will also be a colored motion picture, through the courtesy of Cornelius Wood, of a canoe trip through the Quetico-Superior Primeval Area on the Minnesota-Ontario border.

Brookline Bird Club Trips

Open to Members of the Massachusetts Audubon Society

January 1, all day. Ipswich and Dunes. Mr. Robert Hogg, CRystal 9-3431-W.

January 2, all day. Rockport and Cape Ann. Mr. Lewis, CRystal 9-1355-R. Afternoon, Arnold Arboretum to Leverett. Miss Collins, COMmonwealth 6-5800.

January 9, all day. Ipswich River Sanctuary and vicinity. Mr. Walsh, Beverly 1470. Afternoon, Nahant. Mr. Kelly, LYnn 2-9024.

January 16, all day. Newburyport and vicinity. Miss Barry, MELrose 4-5888. Afternoon, Mystic Lakes. Miss Woodbury, CRystal 9-0010.

January 23, forenoon. Boston Fenway. Miss Hanson, COMmonwealth 6-1595.

January 30, all day. Auto trip to Boxford and Essex County. Mr. Lewis, CRystal 9-1355-R. Afternoon, Devereux and Marblehead Neck. Mrs. Boot, LYnn 8-0257.

February 6, all day. Rockport and Cape Ann. Mr. Beattie, ELiot 4-6592. Afternoon, Arboretum to Leverett Pond. Miss Wollaston, BLUEhills 8-2750.

News of Bird Clubs

On Friday evening, January 15, the BROOKLINE BIRD CLUB will hold its Annual Meeting at the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 28 Newbury Street, Boston, at 7:45. Torrey Jackson and David Tucker will present the program.

At the January 11 meeting of the ALLEN BIRD CLUB of Springfield, the color film "Beaver Valley," a Walt Disney production, will be shown. At the February 1 meeting, Mr. and Mrs. J. Edward Hyde will present "A Trip Around the Gaspé," illustrated with color slides. On January 16 a bus trip to Cape Ann is scheduled, with Mr. Ernest Yates as leader.

The HOFFMANN BIRD CLUB of Pittsfield will hold its Annual Covered Dish Supper on Saturday, January 30, with program to be announced.

The WATERBURY (CONN.) NATURALIST CLUB, at its meeting on January 5, will hear an account of the western trip taken last summer by the Walter P. Greens, illustrated with color slides. On January 19 the club will enjoy "Nanook of the North," one of the great documentary films of all time. This detailed study of Eskimo life, produced in the 1920's, has recently been re-released with a sound track. On Sunday, January 10, Mr. and Mrs. Robert B. Sturges will conduct an outing at Indian Jack's Cave and Buttermilk Falls.

At a meeting of the STANTON BIRD CLUB, Lewiston-Auburn, Maine, to be held at Y.M.C.A. Hall on January 4, at 7:30 P.M., there will be a presentation of three films prepared by Martin Bovey and loaned to the club by Minneapolis-Moline Company: "Birds of the Prairie," "Bird Nesting Time," and "Waterfowl in the Spring." On February 1, the club will observe its Thirty-fifth Birthday Anniversary, and the speaker of the evening will be Mr. Everett F. Groaton, who will give an illustrated talk entitled, "Let's Look at Maine."

Reviews of Recent Acquisitions

THE BIRDS OF JAPAN. Their Status and Distribution. By Oliver L. Austin, Jr., and Nagahisa Kuroda. Bulletin of the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard College, Vol. 109, No. 4, Cambridge, Mass. October, 1953. 638 pages. Paper bound. \$5.50.

As head of the Wildlife Branch, Natural Resources Section of the Occupation Forces in Japan for three and one half years, the senior author of this volume had opportunity for ornithological studies enjoyed by few outside of the Japanese people themselves. He also had the help and knowledge of the junior author, Nagahisa Kuroda, whose father is also illustrious as an ornithologist in Japan. In his Foreword, the senior author comments, "In the larger sense this volume is that of all the Japanese ornithologists as much as it is Nagahisa Kuroda's and mine," for he made good use of the literature already extant and of the co-operation of the number of ornithologists with whom he was in contact during those years. The authors modestly indicate that it is impossible to produce a faunal work that is not out of date soon after it comes off the press, but they remark that such work provides a standard from which successors may fill in the blanks in our knowledge which are always present.

As would be expected of Oliver Austin, *The Birds of Japan* is skillfully developed from the scientific angle to indicate the present status and distribution of all species recorded by specimen. The book is not embellished with pictures, and there are no descriptions given, the reader's knowledge of the various groups being presupposed. However, there is so much similarity between most of the groups of birds found in Japan and those found in this country that it is an easy work to follow from the point of view of North Americans. Also, there have been included both the English and the Japanese common names, as well as the scientific names.

Furthermore, the authors have included material beyond the habits of the various species that will make the book particularly interesting to the layman or the amateur ornithologist. Not only has the influence of human population on the birds been indicated, but the use of birds in Japan for decorative motif and for food and their place in literature, art, legend, and folklore are interestingly, though briefly, discussed in the text.

The Birds of Japan deserves to be included in the library of everyone keenly interested in birds, whether professional or amateur. The reviewer therefore predicts that this book, like Dr. Austin's earlier

Birds of Korea, also published by the Harvard museum, will soon be out of print, and it behooves those who wish to have this book to place an order early to avoid the disappointment of not being able to secure a copy.

C. RUSSELL MASON

WHEN WILL THE WORLD BE MINE?

By Miriam Schlein. Illustrated by Jean Charlot. William R. Scott, Inc., Publisher. New York. 1953. 36 pages. \$2.25.

O to be very young again and to discover the world through the eyes of Little Snowshoe Rabbit! It is a pastel pink and green and white world, according to the delightful lithographs by Jean Charlot.

The story carries Little Snowshoe Rabbit from his birth in spring to the first fall of snow, when he is ready to leave his mother. The lesson that Little Snowshoe learns very early in his short life is one that many humans, of all ages, would do well to take to their hearts. "Is it mine?" is the question the bunny asks as he explores the wonderful world — the grass, the singing brook, the tree, the bush, and the thicket. His mother tells him yes, the world is his and when he is older he will understand that "The stream must run as the field must stand still, the stars must fade when the sun comes up, and only the bird can fly over the hill."

Finally, Little Rabbit grows snowshoes on his paws and discovers that his thick brown coat is now white like the falling snow. Again he asks, "Is this mine to keep?" and now he is grown up enough to understand when the mother rabbit tells him, "It is yours as everything else is yours. It is yours as long as you need it."

This is beautiful prose for the six-to-eight-year-olds to read, or for a grownup to read to a child of almost any age.

EMILY GOODE

FIDDLER CRAB. By Mary Adrian. With illustrations on every page. Holiday House. New York. 1953. 44 pages. \$2.00.

No wonder children of today are interested in natural science. The Holiday House Life-cycle stories present the facts of animal growth from the egg to adult. Though factual, these stories are narrated in a style as exciting as fiction.

As the reader turns the beautifully illustrated pages, he learns how the fiddler crab egg hatches into a tiny zoea and floats with the rest of the plankton in the great pastures of the sea. His single large eye sees only light. As food touches his mouth he eats. Once a week he sinks slowly to the ocean floor to shed his shell and become a larger zoea. Lucky little fellow to escape the fate of many of his brothers and

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sisters, eaten by sea creatures! Finally he grows to the size of a pinhead, and with a new name, *Megalops*, he becomes a predator.

For a month the now-fierce little creature swims up and down in his ocean home. Then he throws off his shell once more and changes into a true fiddler crab, no bigger than a grain of rice. His adventures continue, with his environment pictured on every page. We see him make his first burrow and plug up the doorway with a ball of sand. He has a fight and he wins a mate. On the last page he waves his large right claw and, with his periscope eyes turned upward, he looks ahead to two more years of mischief, food, and fun.

EMILY GOODE

CRUICKSHANK'S POCKET GUIDE TO THE BIRDS (East and Central North America). By Allan D. Cruickshank. 72 photographs in full color by Helen G. Cruickshank and 78 drawings by Don Eckelberry. Dodd, Mead & Company, New York. 1953. 216 pages. \$2.95.

This pocket guide for bird identification by our good friend Allan Cruickshank will be heartily welcomed by the amateur, by the beginner in bird study, and by teachers who are presenting elementary courses in bird identification. We are glad to have Allan Cruickshank set down in writing, with accompanying excellent drawings by Don Eckelberry and superb full-color photographs by Helen Cruickshank, the results of his varied and interesting experiences in bird identification through the years. As Allan explains in his Preface, his book is not intended to compete with Peterson's *Field Guide* or with Pough's *Audubon Bird Guides*, all of which are considered indispensable to those seriously interested in field work. It is intended to present the basic principles of bird identification and to help the amateur distinguish birds by establishing their classification as to group, family, and type before considering species.

Identification by all manner of characters, from color, shape, and size to song and call note, are well discussed under the chapter on identification. The eight pages of habitat groups for quick field recognition is a worth-while feature. Family groups are presented in the standard sequence used by the American Ornithologists' Union, beginning with the more primitive birds, like loons and grebes, and concluding with the most specialized, highly developed birds, the finches and sparrows. However, within the group Mr. Cruickshank has occasionally shifted species for

convenient comparison, and in the vireos and warblers he has broken down these complicated groups into small divisions in accordance with pattern — something he was unable to do, however, with the still more complicated sparrows. In the discussion of various species, the main points to observe in identification are placed in bold type, and the range and season of occurrence — so important for beginners to learn — are indicated throughout the book.

Those who have hoped for a field trip under Cruickshank's guidance will appreciate this book. Those who have had the privilege of field trips with him will recall those pleasant experiences and profit further by reviewing the "Hints to Bird Identification" which Allan Cruickshank has always been so generous in sharing.

C. RUSSELL MASON

JOHN JAMES AUDUBON: HIS LIFE. By Catherine Owens Peare. Illustrated by Margaret Ayer. Henry Holt and Co., New York, 1953. 89 pages. \$2.00.

As an adult reviewer of children's books, I sometimes question my own judgments and wonder if the children will agree with my ideas. So this small volume on the life of John James Audubon has been submitted to a new reviewer of the age group for which the book was intended. This reviewer is nine years old, and in the fourth grade at Derby Academy, where she is receiving the advantages of our Audubon course in Conservation and Natural Science. It is her own work, unaided.

"John James Audubon, by Catherine Owens Peare, is a very good book. It is about a young boy who grows up to be a great nature lover. So of course he went wandering. His mother fixed him a big basket of lunch. When Jean (Jean was the name they called him in France) came home his basket was always full of treasures: birds' nests, birds' eggs, brightly colored stones, leaves with strange shapes, beetles, butterflies, flowers. I am sure you will like it if you will read it. He grew up to be a famous painter of birds and animals. We have a painting by John James Audubon called the Swallow Tailed Hawk."

WENDY MAY

As might be expected in a book for children, considerable space is given to Audubon's childhood days and early adventures, but his later travels and triumphs are covered adequately. I concur in Wendy's judgment that this is a "good book" for youngsters, as an introduction to the career of the great naturalist-artist-author-conservationist.

JOHN B. MAY

REVIEWS, con't.

THE CARE AND TRAINING OF HOME CAGE BIRDS. By Bernard Poe. G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York. 1953. 120 pages. \$2.50.

The fast-growing interest in cage birds in this country has created a demand for a book covering their care and training. The opening chapter of this recent publication, "When You Buy A Bird," is a useful guide in selecting the individual bird. The book also contains valuable hints which will aid one to become adjusted to the bird and also help the bird to adjust to a new environment. It is evident that the future happiness of both the owner and the bird are dependent on such factors as the type and size of cage selected and the proper care and treatment of the bird.

In the chapter on ailments, the author has provided a number of common-sense suggestions and easy-to-understand treatments.

The mating and breeding of cage birds is discussed, and the digestive, respiratory, and circulatory systems of the birds explained in an interesting and non-technical manner.

There are twelve pages of illustrations in black and white, and the author has furnished a most complete bibliography.

Many suggestions will be found for keeping small cage birds in the home — canaries and other members of the finch family, as well as various members of the parakeet and parrot tribe and other exotic species.

This is a handy book to keep on the shelf and will prove a welcome aid when a pet bird gives one cause for alarm.

IVY LEMON

THE WHOOPING CRANE. Research Report No. 3 of the National Audubon Society. By Robert Porter Allen. Illustrated with photographs, drawings, and maps. National Audubon Society, New York. 1952. xxvi, 246 pages. \$3.00.

In this Report No. 3 Robert Porter Allen has done his usual fine job of sympathetic study of yet another threatened North American species of bird, Report No. 1 being on the Ivory-billed Woodpecker, and Report No. 2 on the Roseate Spoonbill.

It is interesting to learn that the Whooping Crane, *Grus americana*, apparently first appeared during the Pleistocene Period, bones of cranes having been discovered in California, Idaho, Kansas, and Florida. Its more recent distribution was fairly extensive, as it ranged west to Utah, east to New Jersey, north to the Arctic Coast and south to central Mexico. Its former abundance, which was often exaggerated,

apparently numbered approximately thirteen hundred birds around 1870. The largest shrinkage in its numbers took place between 1865 and 1899, and since then it has continued more or less steadily until 1922.

At the time of the establishment of the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge in Texas in 1937, the known population of Whooping Cranes was reduced to 30 or 31 individuals, with one Crane lingering in the marshland area of Louisiana. Since then our hopes have risen and fallen with the fluctuations in the population trends of these remaining birds. It is distressing to note that since Bob Allen's very worthwhile research project, the Crane numbers have suffered further losses, and as of December, 1953, the population is now reckoned at 24 birds.

This Allen study is complete, with the very best photographs and drawings of this extremely rare North American bird. Bob combines the ideal qualities of a research project such as this with his tremendous patience and powers of observation. He recounts his search for the Crane's breeding grounds in Canada, describes the variety of foods which form its diet, and gives a fine description of the courtship dance of this species, illustrated with his own drawings. He points out how the Whooping Crane is the victim of habitat and overspecialization. As the habitat requirements of a species become fairly inflexible, they do not permit the bird to continue in marginal areas when the prime habitat is altered or destroyed.

In conclusion, Allen points out that our greatest hope for saving the Whooping Crane lies in an educational program whereby the precious few remaining birds will not be illegally killed by uninformed residents along their migrational route. It is an understatement to say that the future for the Whooping Crane is not bright. Everyone interested in this magnificent species certainly should have this excellent research report.

RICHARD BORDEN

LAND BIRDS OF AMERICA. By Robert Cushman Murphy and Dean Amadon. McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York. 1953. \$12.50.

Few books can hope to live up to the often exaggerated claims of the publisher's advertising department, but *Land Birds of America* is easily one of the most beautiful books on American birds. Great skill and good craftsmanship on the part of the engravers, designers, and printers, combined with the cream of the photographs from some of this country's best bird photographers, make this an important publica-

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tion. Except for one or two missing notables, the list of contributing photographers reads like a "Who's Who" of American bird photographers and includes such well-known names as Eliot Porter (chief contributor), Hal Harrison, Allan and Helen Cruickshank, and Samuel A. Grimes. The color rendition is usually faithful, and the pictures sharp and clear.

Bird photographs are certainly splendid visual aids to bird study, but it does seem, however, that the authors overstate their case in the Introduction when they seem to imply that bird artists have outlived their usefulness and should join the Dodo in extinction. There are many instances when the camera cannot do what the eye and brush of the artist can. For example, most of the hawk pictures in this book are of captive birds. None of the color pictures show a hawk wheeling high overhead or diving on its quarry. Why? Because this type of still photography rarely gives more than the most mediocre results. It will be a long time before anyone can depict photographically in color the stoop of the Duck Hawk on a Flicker. Yet an artist can do it accurately and with ease. It is this reviewer's opinion that the artist and photographer will continue to work side by side for years to come in illustrating behavior and action of birds.

This is not just a picture book with a few lines under each picture. Rare as it is to combine a large volume of pictures and an excellent and readable text, here it is. It should come as no surprise that the text keeps pace with the pictorial quality of the book, for it was written by two of the top ornithologists and ornithological writers of the world, Murphy and Amadon. As the book takes up the birds by families and species, the reviewer at first felt it just was not the kind of book one reads from cover to cover, but a sampling of it proved to be so absorbing that a start was made at the beginning and the book enjoyed to the end. It is delightfully written. The authors have not resped the old ground but have contributed much new, fresh material about the birds which they discuss. When the reader finishes the book he will find that, not only has he gained a great deal of information about individual birds, but the authors have helped to broaden his ornithological horizons by imparting something of a global concept of bird life — of bird families and their distribution. This is a fine, beautiful book that everyone, expert or beginner, should want to add to his library.

ALVAH W. SANBORN

PETS. By Frances N. Chrystie. With illustrations by Gillet Good Griffin. Little, Brown and Company, Boston. 1953. 272 pages. \$3.50.

The author's aim in writing this book is, in her own words, "to write a book for children on how to choose pets which are right for them, how to care for the pets and understand their personalities." The various people to whom I have lent the book, a school principal, a cat breeder, and a fifth grade boy and girl, all think that Miss Chrystie has covered the subject admirably. I would like to see this book in school and camp libraries, and a copy presented to every child who acquires a new pet.

Certain animals are not recommended as pets because of their value conservation-wise in the balance of nature. Others are excluded from the humane point of view. Miss Chrystie believes that owning a pet should be a two-way situation, that the pet should enjoy being owned! As one who has cared for a great variety of wildlings, I agree heartily that keeping an unhappy animal a prisoner is a poor demonstration of the supposed superiority of the human animal! It is also poor conservation practice. With the tremendous number of animals suggested in the book no one could fail to find a suitable pet for a child of any age or temperament. The index lists creatures from Beef Steer to Zebra Fish.

Miss Chrystie has supplemented her own knowledge and experience by consulting experts in other fields. Thus representatives from the New York Zoological Society, The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, the National Audubon Society, the Girl Scouts of the United States of America, and Camp Fire Girls, Inc. aided in the study.

Everything a child, or his parent, will want to know is included in *Pets*. There is information on housing, feeding, and training of various animals. The chapters on first aid are particularly good, since they suggest which ailments can be cared for by the pet-owner and which require the services of a veterinarian. The book is delightfully readable as well as important to better relations between child and pet. For this reason I am lending my copy to the teachers of various conservation classes, to be lent to as many pupils as possible between my school visits. I am willing to risk losing the book because of my conviction of the good *Pets* can do for both the child and the owned animal.

Possessing a pet is not only fun for a child, but an incentive to the development of responsibility, patience, and self-control.

EMILY GOODE

REVIEWS, con't.

JOHN LACEY'S BOOK OF WOOD-CARVING. By John Lacey. Illustrated. Prentice-Hall, New York. 1953. 108 pages. \$2.95.

John Lacey re-enters the literary field with *John Lacey's Book of Woodcarving*—this time without the writing experience of Tom Moore McBride, the lack of which is sorely felt. The composition cannot be classed as exceptional, and of the instructive value little can be said.

The gist of the book is a loose and inadequate explanation, in one hundred and six pages of very large print, of the woodcarving art as applied to dogs, horses, lions, elephants, fishes, birds, and pictorial art, decorative art, modern sculpture, and mechanical drawing. More than half the text is a rehash of a previous and much larger publication, *The Audubon Book of Bird Carving*, as told to the aforementioned Mr. McBride, with so many omissions from the original that the impotency cannot go without comment. His un-anatomical approach to animal carving leaves a void that is much more confusing than instructive. There are points brought out that are good standard practice but so incomplete as to leave a reader of limited knowledge of mechanical anatomy and handling of tools groping in the dark. The author brushed off the whole matter in one epic sentence, "Here is where your powers of observation will give your figure the necessary details that make a difference" — not particularly instructive.

One feels that the immense scope of the subject matter is so extensive in nature that a book of this type could not possibly cope with it. It flounders in ineptness and sinks in its own inadequacy.

ROBERT MORSE

BIRDS OF FLORIDA. By Francis W. Hall. Published by the Author, Jacksonville Beach, Fla. Reprinted 1952. 34-page pamphlet, with one color plate and many black and white drawings. 85 cents.

A pamphlet on the birds of Florida is a desirable item for supplying, in inexpensive form, a guide to the bird life for the many visitors who head south for the winter months. Mr. Hall's idea is therefore to be commended. The booklet is sturdily bound, is printed on good paper, and many of the black and white drawings are commendable. Unfortunately, the color frontispiece is not as attractive as it might be and some of the drawings are open to criticism, although most of them give a good general impression of the bird represented.

In the drawing of the Man-o'-War Bird, for example, the two small flying birds in the background are characteristic, but the illustrator has taken considerable liberty in portraying the bird in the foreground, which looks more like the Quetzal surcharge on the air-mail stamps of Guatemala than the bird for which it was intended.

There are some extravagant statements made in the text, such as indicating that there are more rare species found in Florida than in any other State, and there are occasional comments on the status of certain species which are not in accord with the reviewer's long experience with Florida birds. The descriptions could be improved by emphasizing identification and leaving out plumage detail, and they are often inadequate, especially where no drawing is provided and the reader must judge as to whether the bird referred to is male, female, or young, or whether the plumages differ with sex and age. Occasionally they seem to the reviewer to be incorrect. Habits are also ascribed to a single species which really apply to an entire group of birds.

There are a surprising number of broad statements made, such as that the Kingbird is found at almost any location; that the Phoebe is as expert at catching flies as the flycatchers (the Phoebe is a flycatcher); that the Mourning Dove breeds on fields and prairies (it is true that it feeds there, but this bird does not usually nest on the ground); that some birds are more sociable or more courageous than others, which is a matter particularly hard to judge. That the Eastern Glossy Ibis is to be seen only in a rookery, and yet they spend only a small portion of their season in a rookery; that the Black-crowned Night Heron, a bird that is quite obvious in the field, is "not usually seen unless one is really looking for them." There is often no indication that birds listed as uncommon in summer are only summer stragglers and not breeding birds.

There are also an astonishing number of misspelled words, including even the names of some of the birds. The Carolina Wren is mentioned as being very similar to Bewick's, whereas it might better have been stated that it is similar to the Florida Wren, which is more adequately described in the text but which is simply a subspecies of the Carolina Wren.

It seems unfortunate that a booklet so well-conceived could be so poorly executed, while a little careful editing would have made it worth while for every birding visitor to Florida.

C. RUSSELL MASON

Nash Conservation Awards

Creation of an annual five thousand dollar awards program for professional contributions in the field of conservation of natural resources was announced recently by George W. Mason, President and Chairman, Nash-Kelvinator Corporation. Recognition will also be given to non-professional contributions.

The nation-wide program will be known as "Nash Conservation Awards." Ten cash awards of five hundred dollars each will be presented to ten professional conservationists working in education, research, administration, or enforcement, in any field related to soil, water, forest, fish, or wildlife conservation. In addition, ten awards consisting of plaques and citations will be given to non-professionals whose contributions to conservation have been performed as acts of good citizenship.

Nominations for awards are to be made by newspaper rod-and-gun and conservation editors, rod-and-gun clubs, and public and private conservation agencies. Final selections will be made by the Awards Committee, which for 1953 consists of Ed Dodd, creator of the Mark Trail cartoons; Pieter Fotherburgh, Editor of the *New York State Conservationist*; Johnny Mock, Outdoors Editor of the *Pittsburgh Press*; Alastair MacBane, Chief of Information Bureau, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and Michael Hudoba, Washington correspondent and authority on conservation legislation. This year's awards will be presented at a dinner in Washington next January.

From Our Correspondence

An Appreciation and A Correction

Dear Mr. Mason:

I wish to thank you and Judge Walcott for the article about my father, Mr. Francis H. Allen, which appeared in the President's Page of the December *Bulletin*. It was an enthusiastic and friendly article and I am appreciative of its being published.

Perhaps because I inherit some of my father's love of accuracy, I want to correct some errors which crept into the first paragraph. All of his married life my father was a pew-holder in the Episcopal church, although he was not a member of any church. It is not true that either he or my mother "considered themselves members of the Unitarian church" in West Roxbury. Mr. and Mrs. Arnold were great friends, as well as neighbors, for many years, but my father did not go to church there. My mother was a communicant of the Episcopal church, and it was to that church, in both West Roxbury and in Dedham, that the family went.

The editorial love for accuracy can sometimes be a passion for accuracy, and it was that on occasion with my father. During the last week of his life as my sister read aloud to him from a recent book, he frequently called her attention to errors of fact or expression!

So I am sure you can see that my correcting of these mistakes does not detract from the excellence of Judge Walcott's article.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) Elizabeth A. Thompson

(Mrs. Wm. Huntington Thompson)

Wary But Welcome Travelers

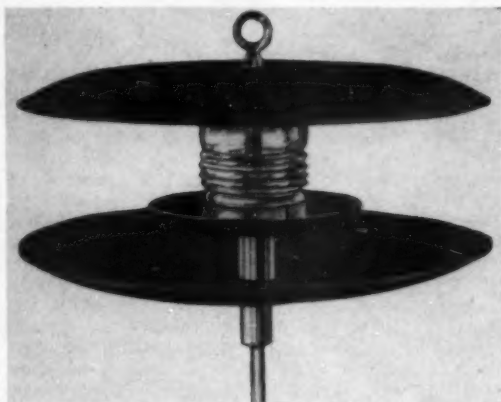
"When my friends the Everett Wallsters, of North Weymouth, went into their kitchen on the morning of October 20, they discovered a group of Golden-crowned Kinglets nestled, fast asleep, among the bayberry branches in their window box. One by one those tiny balls of feathers stirred themselves and came to life.

No one in that household could think of leaving for work or school till the last one awakened, and that happened at five minutes to eight when it stretched and stretched just like a baby, then flew off to join the others.

During this time the Wallsters observed many more Kinglets in the near-by shrubbery showing flashes of golden crowns as they flitted about. My friends concluded that this flock had flown all night and had become exhausted."

East Weymouth, Mass.

Gladys Nelson

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Field Notes

The very mild weather which has persisted throughout the autumn and up to the time of this writing, mid-December, has shown its effect on the movement of birds. Insect eaters like the warblers and swallows have lingered late. A few northern raptors have appeared, but we have very few reports of northern seedeaters as yet. What will the New Year bring us? Stop, Look, Listen! Then send in your items of interest promptly for the *Bulletin* or the *Records of New England Birds*. Without your co-operation we cannot keep our Field Notes interesting and up-to-date.

On Sunday, Nov. 22, three rare birds were present in the Berkshires at the same time. A DICKCISSEL, second County record for the past 100 years, was discovered at his feeder by Edward Kopf, Jr., of Pittsfield. A CAROLINA WREN appeared at the home of Miss Alice Riggs in Stockbridge the day before and stayed several days. A TUFTED TITMOUSE at the Stockbridge home of Mrs. Lawrence Shields was seen by numerous bird watchers. (Mrs. C. E. Rinsma saw another Titmouse in Stockbridge on May 29, 1953, and these records of the Tufted Titmouse comprise the second and third for Berkshire County, according to Bartlett Hendricks, who sent us the items.)

Bob Wood reports these observations for southern Plymouth and Bristol Counties: Nov. 29, Dartmouth, BALDPATE, MOCKINGBIRD, 8 FIELD SPARROWS; Nov. 29, Westport, SHORT-EARED OWL, CAROLINA WREN, 2 TOWHEES; Dec. 5, Taunton, FOX SPARROW; Dec. 6, Lakeville, 2 RUDDY DUCKS, 3 HOODED MERGANSERS, PHOEBE, WESTERN PALM WARBLER, WINTER WREN, 3 BLUEBIRDS, FIELD SPARROW.

From Ronald G. Thatcher, of Middleboro, comes a report of a DICKCISSEL seen there Oct. 28. He also writes that last summer he noted a flock of BROWN-HEADED (ACADIAN) CHICKADEES on Mt. Washington, N. H.; and about two miles from the mountain he came upon a female EVENING GROSBEAK, an interesting record for this species.

Mrs. Elizabeth Romaine sends us an interesting account of her recent high spots in birding near her Middleboro home. On Nov. 17 she noted a NORTHERN SHRIKE at South Carver and another at Sandwich, Nov. 20, where she also saw, with Miss Louise Pratt, a PACIFIC LOON. Nov. 22 she had a PHOEBE at Lakeville; Nov. 24, a WINTER WREN and a WESTERN PALM WARBLER at Rochester; Nov. 26, one TREE SWALLOW at Lakeville; Nov. 27, 2 CAROLINA WRENS, Middleboro;

Nov. 30, the first EVENING GROSBEAK, Middleboro; Dec. 1, FOX SPARROW, Middleboro.

Observers at Audubon House were alerted on the morning of Dec. 10 when a bird was seen preening itself on one of the ornaments on the steeple of the New Old South Church, which had been the favorite perch of a Duck Hawk in past winters. To the regret of all, although it was a falcon, it turned out to be a SPARROW HAWK and not the famed Peregrine. But we are still hoping!

A letter from William Copeland, of Framingham, tells us that a LARK SPARROW appeared at his feeder, Nov. 8, and was seen daily through Nov. 22, the date of the letter. Many Juncos, Chickadees, and White-throated Sparrows were also present. Blake Johnson, who lives in Framingham about five miles from Mr. Copeland, watched a Lark Sparrow at his feeder, Dec. 3.

Mrs. James R. Downs, of South Londonderry, Vt., writes that the first PINE SISKINS for this season visited her feeders on Nov. 1, and from then on through the month from 2 to 30 birds were seen daily. An immature NORTHERN SHRIKE was in the vicinity all through November, a MYRTLE WARBLER appeared on Nov. 19, 5 RED CROSSBILLS were present Nov. 1-5, and on Nov. 29 an ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER spent the day close to the house, busily feeding in the low shrubs.

An AMERICAN EGRET was seen in Rowley, Nov. 29, by the Arthur Argues, who later that day saw a SNOWY OWL at Ipswich, an interesting combination of a southern and a northern species on the same trip.

Miss Anita Neal, of Falmouth, writes us that on Oct. 23 "Bennie," a GREEN-WINGED TEAL, returned to Seder's Pond for the third or fourth year. He comes in every afternoon to be fed, with 50-100 Blacks and Mallards. "Grandma," a Black Duck, has been coming at least as long as Bennie.

A flock of 15 CANVAS-BACKS was seen on Assawompsett Pond in Lakeville, Nov. 29 and 30, by many observers; on Dec. 6 Adrian Whiting and John Foster counted 51 at the same place, in a compact flock.

Guy Emerson observed 12 HARLEQUIN DUCKS at Squibnocket, Nov. 29.

Three ROUGH-LEGGED HAWKS were seen at Nauset Oct. 17 by C. Russell Mason and Mrs. Mason, and on Oct. 27 one was seen at Dartmouth by Mrs. Ralph Hentersee.

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Field Notes

On Dec. 3 a **BLACK GYRFALCON** was seen at Plum Island by Ludlow Griscom and party; 2 **DUCK HAWKS** were also observed, one of them a very large dark bird.

On Nov. 21 members of the Children's Museum Bird Club watched a **SPARROW HAWK** pursuing a **GOSHAWK** in the Arnold Arboretum.

Miss Gladys Sylvester reports 200 **BLACK-BELLIED PLOVERS** at Winthrop, Dec. 4, a late date for such a large flock.

Mr. and Mrs. Philip Heywood report a careful observation of a **RUFF** at Madaket, Nantucket, Nov. 28, feeding on a lawn at close range.

Henry Bigelow, of Concord, found a dead **SCREECH OWL** in a hole in a tree, with its claws buried in the body of a **FLYING SQUIRREL**.

Two **SHORT-EARED OWLS** were seen at Plum Island in late November by Mr. and Mrs. John Walsh.

Mrs. Joseph J. Skinner, of North Gosham, Maine, reported on Dec. 5 that an immature **RED-HEADED WOODPECKER** had been seen near her home for about a month. She also commented incidentally that last winter she had a flock of Evening Grosbeaks numbering 164 birds and that she fed them 650 pounds of sunflower seeds!

While driving through Ogunquit, Maine, Dec. 6, John Wills observed 2 **TREE SWALLOWS** flying back and forth over seaweed catching insects.

Mrs. Bertram Wellman reports seeing 3 **BARN SWALLOWS** at Great Meadows Refuge, Concord, Dec. 6. Another late Barn Swallow was seen on Martha's Vineyard, Nov. 27, by Guy Emerson, and on Nov. 28 he picked up a **BANK SWALLOW** which later died.

Prof. Lawrence B. Chapman writes that he saw a **MOCKINGBIRD** in his garden at Princeton, Nov. 24, and it was still present on Nov. 27; it spends part of its time eating asparagus berries.

Mr. and Mrs. Donald D. Walker, of Duxbury, report a **BLUE-GRAY GNAT CATCHER** at Powder Point, Dec. 3.

Mrs. Maxwell E. Foster observed a **CAROLINA WREN** in her garden at Ipswich, Nov. 22; it stayed around all afternoon and was singing.

A. Whitman Higgins, of Middleboro, writes that one of the **CAROLINA WRENS** that nested in his yard was still around on Nov. 19. On that date he also saw a **WINTER WREN**.

C. H. S. Merrill records a **WINTER WREN** at Newmarket, N. H., Dec. 8.

An **ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER** visited briefly at breakfast time the feeders of Dr. John B. May in Cohasset, Dec. 5, but quickly moved on to a small rosebush still decorated with half a dozen pink blossoms; it was seen in the rosebush again, Dec. 6, both times being observed at a distance of less than six feet.

A late **PRAIRIE WARBLER** was seen in Wellesley, Nov. 15, by Dave Freeland.

Arthur Argue noted a **NORTHERN YELLOW-THROAT** in West Peabody, Dec. 6.

A discriminating **YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT** made Nov. 27 the occasion for visits to the homes of two Audubon directors, Robert Walcott and Ludlow Griscom, in Cambridge. Another visited the home of a former director, Mrs. Robert B. Greenough, in Milton, Nov. 28.

Mrs. Bertha Raymond, of Hingham, called to say that a male **WILSON'S WARBLER** had been present in her garden from Nov. 29 through Dec. 3. Mrs. Albert Snow also observed a Wilson's Warbler at her home in Winchester, Dec. 6. A third report came from George A. Drew, Jr., of Belmont, that he had one on his bird bath, Nov. 21, and he told us that Mr. and Mrs. Karl Zerbe also saw one at their home in Belmont a few days earlier.

Miss Mabel Potter, of Fairhaven, writes that a **CARDINAL** appeared at her home there, Nov. 16. From the western part of the State comes a report from Mrs. W. G. Oehlhof, of Springfield, that Mr. and Mrs. C. J. Page, with their two sons, observed a Cardinal at Colrain, Nov. 18, feeding on bush honeysuckle berries.

Mrs. James Keith, of the Hoffmann Bird Club, had 3 **EVENING GROSBEAKS** in Pittsfield, Oct. 31, and they were still there when she wrote on Nov. 20. Miss Jessie L. Keene, of Waldoboro, Maine, reported 1 to 7 Evening Grosbeaks, Nov. 29-30. She also told us that Mrs. Dorothy Hayes, of Waldoboro, had a **LARK SPARROW** at her home, Nov. 26. Mrs. C. Eaton Pierce, of Hingham, had one female Evening Grosbeak at her feeder, Nov. 29.

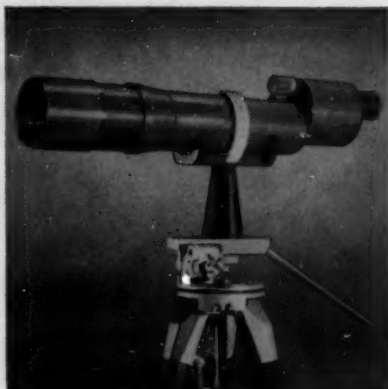
Four **PINE GROSBEAKS** were observed in West Becket, Nov. 3, by Mrs. Ruth Derby.

Mrs. Harry Dodge, of Winthrop, called to tell us that a **SNOW BUNTING** was at her feeders on Nov. 24 and 25.

Kent W. Mathews, of Lowell, writes that his mother saw recently 5 **RACCOONS** crossing the road within a nine-minute walk of the city square.

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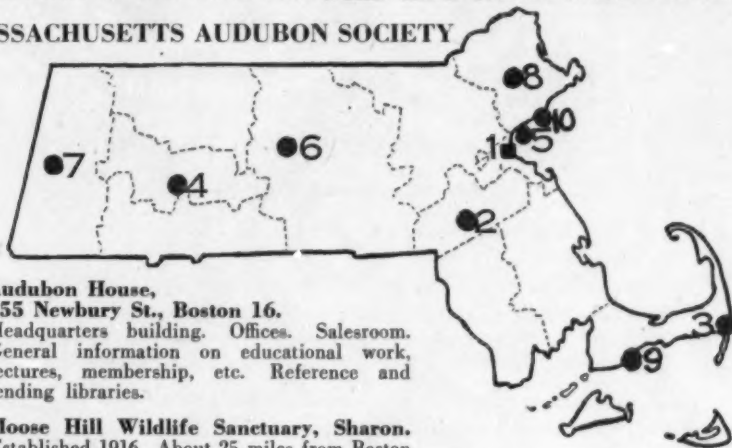
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